



250th Anniversary Cake

It is hard to imagine it is fifty years ago that our domestic science class was given the honour of making the cake for the 250th Anniversary celebrations. Under the guidance of the Domestic Science Teacher, Pauline Goddard, we blocked off sections of three enormous tins to make cakes in the shape of each number. Each tin was carefully lined with greaseproof paper, mitred exactly at the bottom so that the numbers would be perfect. A vast amount of Christmas cake mix was prepared and placed carefully in the tins. As far as I remember, the cooking was done in the Aga which, by the time we had reached the Fifth Form was a cooker we had all mastered, right down to raking out the ashes daily with a long-handled scraper.

Over a period of several weeks, the cakes were iced with almond paste and royal icing. Icing baskets, in a lattice pattern, were created over bun tins and filled with handmade flowers and leaves. I am not sure when the cakes were cut. However, I do remember there was enough for everyone in the School to have a taste.

Another lasting memory of the 250th Anniversary celebrations was singing, in the School Choir, music specially composed by Edmund Rubbra. This was recorded for a BBC religious affairs programme. I can still remember the alto part for "Let us now praise famous men" and I carry, in my mind's eye, a picture of Barbara Comber playing the kettledrums.

Ann Wickenden

Pig Drive

For several years in the 1940s and 50s the School had a policy of chasing the boys off the premises on Sunday afternoons for some (presumed) much-needed exercise, and for the lower years this took the form of a group walk – Pig Drive – led by the master on duty.

There were a number of well-worn routes: Audley End was one of them, though we never visited the House itself. Another was the Beeches, that striking line of beech trees which bordered the stream which flowed under what was then the embankment carrying the branch line from Audley End to Saffron Walden.

Most people's favourite was the Copse, the grassed-over mounds and trees that could be reached by going down the Avenue and carrying on in a straight line along a footpath where I think there is now a housing estate. The Copse was ideal for games of the hiding/finding/tagging variety. It is still there, though now very overgrown.

If it was too wet for walking, and if Barney Jacob was on duty, he would announce (to great excitement) that we would have a Monkeyhouse instead. Every single item of equipment in the gym was brought into use and we played 'he' among the ropes, climbing bars, box and pommel horses, mats – the lot. It must have been quite risky and would probably nowadays be banned on Health and Safety grounds.

What did the girls do on Sunday afternoons?

Alan Sillitoe



Taking a break from Pig Drive: l-r Tony Newton, Chris Wood, Alan Sillitoe, Don Atkinson, Peter Nash

While in their spare time . . .

There was both a Senior and Junior Literary Society with records of a Senior Society from the turn of the century. The junior society probably faded following a Cyril Mummery report in *The Avenue*, "This term the Society has been more junior than literary." Meeting regularly through the School year, the seniors enjoyed a programme of readings, debates, literary criticism and discussion.

A Boys' Reading Club met on the last Sunday of term at Robins Acre (home of Headmaster Gerald Littleboy). Each member was expected to read three or four books, preselected novels or biographies, before the meeting. Discussion was lively, particularly from those who had managed the programme in its entirety.

At one time or another there was a Gardening Club, a Railway Society, a Wireless Club. The most durable was an Air League – this was devoted to aircraft recognition.

Under its Editor, Margaret G Yapp (Fido), assisted by a small band of pupils, *The Avenue* appeared each term. It recorded sporting events, meetings of societies, voluntary service accounts and outings. Further literary pieces, poems and articles were contributed by pupils. The whole was professionally printed and bound by Harts the Printers.

Michael How

The following are a few reports on the activities of the various societies as they appeared in The Avenue :

Report of the Senior Literary Society

The year 1944-45 has certainly not been a dull one for the Senior Literary Society. We have enjoyed several essay evenings, including one on Jane Austen and Thackeray and another on Shaw. A third meeting was devoted to the subject "Pessimism in Literature," while yet a fourth dealt with the subject- "Science in relation to Literature." The essayists on these occasions all produced detailed and interesting papers which aroused lively discussions.

The "high spot" of the year came in the Spring Term when the society paid a visit to Cambridge. This formed the yearly outing, and everyone enjoyed seeing Shaw's "St Joan" at the Arts Theatre.

During the Autumn Term two members produced short plays. This made a welcome change from the usual procedure and was appreciated by both the actors and audience, who afterwards discussed the performance, making useful comments. The plays were Good Beating, one of the Little Plays of St. Francis, by Laurence Housman, and the last Act of Galsworthy's The Silver Box.

A debate was arranged, the motion being that "Too much is done for us in the modern world." The voting was fairly even and was preceded by interesting arguments put forward by both sides.

As a relaxation during the tense period of examinations, we read Shaw's "Pygmalion." This proved to be the last meeting of the year as the talk promised for the next meeting was not forthcoming.

Muriel D. Hockley (Age 17)

Dramatic Society, 1949

This year the School was invited to enter the Drama Festival and accordingly we selected a cast to present *Elizabeth Refuses*, under the direction of Mrs Whitlow. The later rehearsals were pleasing, and in the actual performance the cast rose to the occasion and received an excellent report from the adjudicator. Alice Kendon, Elisabeth Collinson and Susan Whiteman all gave good performances; Hilary Jackson by no means lowered the general standard, in spite of the short time she had to study the part; while Paul Honigmann, apart from occasional inaudibility, made a satisfactorily smug and pompous Mr Collins. Mrs Whitlow's production was very effective, not only in the mere mechanics of acting, but in the creation of atmosphere. To conclude, we can do no better than quote the closing words of the adjudicator's appreciation: "This production gave us all great pleasure, and we shall look forward to their work in the future."

Another performance was given as part of a Saturday evening's entertainment; Eleanor Marriage, whom illness had prevented from taking part at the Drama Festival, gave a good performance as Jane, and the play was much appreciated by the School.

We owe Mrs Whitlow our thanks for her interest and work in this production.

Outing of the Natural History Society*, 1947 (*known as NATCH)

This year the Society decided to have its annual outing at Wicken Sedge Fen, a National Trust property some six miles north-west of Newmarket. On Saturday, 5 July, therefore, having hired a

double-decker bus, the members of the Society set forth in high spirits with the prospect of a fine day before them.

Lunch was taken outside Newmarket, at Devils Ditch, opposite the race course. After lunch members were left to their own devices for three quarters of an hour, most exploring the ancient British dyke and ditch, and some studying the flowers of the dyke under the direction of Mr Lenz.

At Wicken Sedge Fen itself we were able to observe at first hand the way in which plants will grow if left entirely untouched by man. We were able to see the black peaty soil of the fens and the sedges of rushes used for basket making.

Unfortunately, the outing came at a time when the first breed of Swallow-tail Butterflies had finished, and the second one had not yet begun. The entomological members of the party who had come equipped with butterfly nets and permits were disappointed.

Perhaps the most amusing event of the day occurred when a plank across a pond, on which members of the Society were swinging, collapsed, precipitating the unfortunates out of their depth in the water. Happily they were retrieved without loss of anything except one gym shoe, and were sent on a cross-country run to help dry them out.

The bus reached home about 7.30 and the outing finished up with a cheer for Mr Lenz who had done so much to ensure the outing's success.

Anthony B Miller (VI)

Orchestra Report, 1963

Both School Orchestras have grown this year. Under Miss Brown's guidance the Junior Orchestra, about 30 strong, entered the Chelmsford Music Festival in May and did well against strong competition, losing by only a few points to the winner of their

class. At the Instrumental Day, Jennie Arman and Margaret Collison gained a Merit Award in the Sonata class.

In November the Senior Orchestra gave a concert in the High Street Baptist Church, Saffron Walden. After intensive effort over an unusually short period of preparation everyone was delighted to learn that nearly £18 was raised at this concert towards the World Hunger Campaign. Following this effort the orchestra was enlarged, by the addition of younger players, to over 50, in readiness for the Spring Concert, eventually to replace the high proportion of sixth formers who must inevitably leave us this year. The woodwind has been exceptionally strong and for the first time the orchestra has undertaken a Rossini overture.

Ivan Cane

Music 1959-60

The main musical event of the Autumn Term was the customary series of carol concerts given by the small choir at Abbey Lane, Finchingfield, Newport and, of course, at School. In one respect the programme broke new ground in that it included an Annunciation carol for female voices alone. In addition to these local concerts the choir also sang once more in Trafalgar Square on the first evening of the holidays.

Earlier in the term was the Senior Concert. Although this is still described as Senior, it has in fact ceased to be given exclusively by seniors. Performances of a high standard were contributed by several juniors and Margaret Collison gave a very mature account of a Mozart piano sonata.

Thanks largely to Kenneth Plant, an informal recital was given by members of the School one Sunday morning in the Winter Term, the main aim being to encourage individual live music-making. Unfortunately it has not yet been possible to repeat this, although it is hoped to do so this term.



A Natch Outing, 1949

Boys' Reading Club

We have carried on with our usual programme of reading three books a term and having a protracted meeting to discuss them. In the Autumn Term, with many new members, we started with a light assignment: Louis Bromfield's *The Rains Came*, Rowena Farre's *Seal Morning* and John Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln*, which last provoked most discussion.

In the Spring Term David Lindsay gave a brilliant introduction to Kafka's *The Trial*. The other books discussed were *The best of Saki* and Lord Birkett's broadcast talks *Six Great Advocates*.

The Summer Term meeting was excellent. Matthew Robinson introduced William Faulkner's *Light in August*, the Headmaster Iris Murdoch's *The Bell* and James Sheehan Hoyle's *The Black Cloud*. James Sheehan's introduction was supplemented by a very scholarly paper from Mr Evans, whom we have been happy to welcome into the Club in place of Mr Gelsthorpe who, we hope, will be introducing yet another educational experiment into the Leicestershire schools.

The Tramp of August 1945

The Centre: Pardshaw - the Young Friends' Hostel, kindly lent by Cumberland and Young Friends through Robert Gillies, The Lea, Pardshaw.

The Tramps: Kathleen Moore, Jean Palmer, Molly (Egg) Eggleton, Pauline Goddard, Jean 'No-brake' Lyell, Judith Layng, Iona Brereton, Pat Jeffery, Dick Palmer, Diffy Butler, Tony Brooks, Marie Lenz, Sheila Galbraith, Bryan Stanger and Eric Lenz.

The following is a truthful account (I hope!) of our amazing adventures in the wilds of the English Lakes, written from day to day by each of our members in turn.

Monday, 13 and Tuesday 14 August

At 4.40 pm on Monday, a strangely bedecked and excited crowd gathered on Walden station. We understand that some hours later this strange phenomenon repeated itself at Euston (our London party).

The Walden group proceeded to Cambridge, and in imposing array we trekked with cycles the whole length of the Cambridge platform to the Bletchley train. Here we changed for Rugby, and there joined our London group. All through the night, we roared north, eating and sleeping, but not much sleeping. At 8.50 am we were thrown out at Cockermouth, and trooped down to the town in search of food and drink. The natives must have seen us coming, for the shutters were all up and no one was about. At 9.30 we stormed the first café to open and before the astonished gaze of the locals disposed of vast quantities of ice-cream and coffee. We then cycled over to Pardshaw and inspected our future abode. We (the boys) found as we expected, that the girls had bagged all the best rooms, beds and clothing and everything else worth having. Having put them in their places and recovered the spoils at the risk of our lives, we then proceeded to eat scoss and mash till bedtime which was early - and weren't we tired.

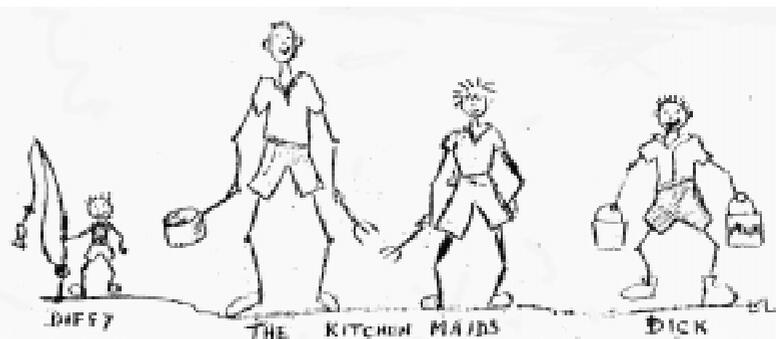
The following were appointed to posts of authority because of their special qualifications: Dick and Diffy as milkmaids. EOL and BS as kitchen maids, EOL as memory-jogger and general-picker up to No-brake Jean (a very busy and difficult job, this!).

Distance: Train 300 miles, Cycle 5 miles.

Friday, 17 August

It dawned a fine day so today we started off early on our bikes equipped with lunch packages and bathing costumes and in the

EOL



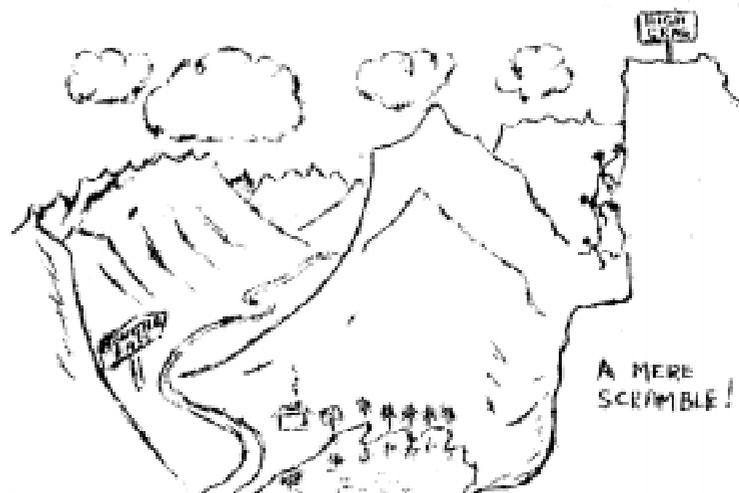
highest of spirits for Lake Buttermere. The ride was exceedingly pleasant.

Arriving at last at Buttermere, we enjoyed the spectacle of Mr Lenz chaining the whole of our thirteen bikes together. The general opinion was most decidedly in favour of a bathe.

After the bathe and lunch, the party split up, and the boys set their ambition on the highest peak they could see - High Crag (2700 ft). From here they had a very good view of Helvellyn and all around.

The rest of us, however, were not to be outdone. Mr and Mrs Lenz with Judith and Molly, went up Scarth Gap and from there up to Seat Crag, whilst the rest of the girls delighted in following a little stream right up the rocky mountains to its source in a large cavern. Once there the answering echoes of the surrounding rocks well repaid us for our struggles in getting up.

We descended in odd groups from our various heights, and about 5 o'clock, re-assembled at the foot of High Stile for a final bathe at



the edge of the lake, afterwards finishing up the remains of our sandwich lunch.

The ride back was rather a race against the threatening clouds, but as some carefree folk chose to take their chance with the rain, and staunchly stuck to their principle of ambling, there were washbowls vacant for everybody, no queues and all were satisfied. Distance: 16 miles by cycle. *Jean Lyell*

Saturday, 18 August 1945

During breakfast, Mr Lenz informed us that we were to have an easy day – doing whatever we liked in the morning, and going out to Ennerdale Water in the afternoon. Most of us spent the morning in Cockermouth – devouring ice-cream, apples and coffee, and doing a little shopping for Mrs Lenz, and on arriving back at Pardshaw, found a delicious meal of stew, vegetables, peaches and blancmange waiting for us.

At 2.30 when we had been presented with our sandwich tea, we all jumped upon our trusty steeds and set forth for Ennerdale. Everyone was told to wait at the first 'Major Road Ahead' sign for the tail-enders of the party, but Bryan, the boys, Jean and Molly forgot the order and raced ahead, and consequently the six of us got hopelessly lost, and had to translate the weird Cumberland dialect before we finally found our way. However, when we did arrive, we found that Mr and Mrs Lenz and Judith were missing. Eventually they turned up, having had to rescue Judith who had lost her way. We then selected a sheltered spot by the Lake edge, and the bathers undressed behind very prickly gorse bushes. Miss Galbraith and Mrs Lenz showed us how swimming should be done, and Bryan Stanger illustrated perfectly how slowly one can make up one's mind before entering a very cold lake. . . .

Distance 18 miles by cycle.

Pauline Goddard

Monday, 20 August

Today, Mr Lenz had planned a long walk round Derwentwater. We cycled to Cockermouth and there caught the 11.30 train to Keswick. We arrived at Keswick without mishap, and after wandering around for a short time, we set off for the lake. After a pleasant walk we arrived at a suitable spot and all sat down and ate our sandwiches (plus custard tart and apples).

When we had finished our dinner, we started the three or four miles walk to the Lodore Falls. After admiring the falls, we climbed up to the top of them. On the way up, No-brake Jean (Lyell) left her

shoes under a boulder and when returning to find them, had completely forgotten where she had left them! Mr Lenz valiantly offered to look under the 2000 odd boulders for them! After a very hectic search all over the falls, he eventually found them. We then continued to follow the stream to Watendlath Tarn where we saw the house of Judith Paris.

. . . . At the Bowder Stone, we had a drink from a nearby cottage and refilled our water-bottles in preparation for the six mile walk back to Keswick. This water came in very handy as the walk back had to be done very quickly as we had already missed the 6.30 train and simply had to catch the 7.20, the snag being that very few of us had lights to our cycles. The hurrying proved of no avail as we missed both trains and had to wait till the 8.30. We filled in the time by eating fish and chips and drinking hot tea.

We arrived at Pardshaw however, in pitch dark without any trouble after we lampless ones had been carefully instructed as to the order in which we were to cycle there. Tony led as lookout.

Everybody had a comfortable night after a strenuous day except for Mr Lenz, who paid the penalty for making applepie beds by having to sleep without any blankets!

Distance: 15 miles walk, 10 miles cycle, 20 miles train.

Kathleen Moore

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Tuesday, 28 August

Up at 5.00, breakfast at 5.30, packing and a hectic ride to catch the 7.10 train at Cockermouth. How we hung out of the train windows as we saw the mountains gradually fade in the distance! Then a long tiring and uneventful journey to Bletchley, where we said goodbye to the Londoners, and on to Walden where we arrived at 8.00 at night.

Distance 5 miles cycle, 300 train.

HOME AT LAST



Total distances travelled: Train 620, cycle 165, walking 31, lake 2.

Total expenses: Fare £2 18s 6d + 6s 5d cycle.

Food, rent etc: £2 10s 0d.

Two Generations as Visiting Students

Eckehard Schöll

At the age of fifteen, I embarked on the adventure of spending three months in a foreign country, this being the first time I had been away from home for such a long time. It was in January 1967 and, after a whole night on the train and rough crossing on the boat from Ostend to Dover, I arrived in the middle of nowhere – Audley End station – from where I was taken to Saffron Walden. That Spring Term of 1967, which I spent as a Visiting Scholar at the Friends' School, turned out to be one of the most influential experiences of my life.

Having been brought up in a caring middle-class home in a small town in South Germany, near Stuttgart, it was not only the change from a public German day school to a private British boarding school, but the experience of a new language, a new culture, a new way of life and religion, and the free spirit and humanity of the Quaker School which formed my views and attitudes and prepared the grounds for my strong feelings of internationalism and open-mindedness which have persisted until today.

In the following years, I returned to Britain many times, and endeavoured also to explore other countries all over the world – from the United States to China and Japan – and make friends with people from other cultures. In fact, after completing my school and university degree in physics in Germany, I decided to take a PhD in Britain. So, in 1978, I graduated from the University of Southampton with a PhD in Applied Mathematics. As well as a year's stay as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Wayne State University, Detroit, in 1983-4 and several

shorter research stays in the US, including a recent Sabbatical at Duke University, North Carolina, in 2000, attendance at many Physics Meetings and private travels with my family have complemented and enriched my experience of foreign countries.

Today, I have the privilege of a profession which is truly international: I am a University Professor of Physics in Berlin and,



Eckehard at work on a view of the School in the Art Room

as a member of the international community of scientists, I maintain friendly ties with many colleagues, students and institutions around the world, and my present research group includes a Russian, a Ukrainian, a Malaysian and a Brazilian.

Some of my memories of the Friends' School are very vivid: the history lessons where Cyril Mummery taught me English Seventeenth Century History – from the Stuarts and Oliver Cromwell to the Glorious Revolution – which made such a strong

impact upon me that I still remember them in detail after almost 35 years and I can still see him standing behind his desk. I thoroughly enjoyed music and art, and took advantage of painting freely in the art room. Mr Lightfoot taught me Russian, which was quite intricate: translating from English into Russian and vice versa without going via German. I remember the philanthropic Headmaster, Kenneth Nicholson, Kenneth Plant, my House Master, Iorwerth John, from whom I learned much about the Quakers' beliefs, Imogen Rowlands, David Gray, and many others. One evening a drama group performed a play on Cain and Abel – the key sentence "Am I my brother's keeper?" which is characteristic of the Christian humanitarian spirit I felt at the FSSW, is still in my ear.

Many years later my daughter, Claudia, came to the Friends' School as a Visiting Scholar for one term. At the age of fourteen, for her too it was the first time away from home. I accompanied her to School on the first day and took her home on the last day of the Summer Term 1994. The School building still looked the same, although new wings had been erected, and even a few of the teachers I had known were still there. Above all, I could still feel the spirit of internationalism. She shared her room with a girl from Korea and two girls from Hong Kong and made very good friends with a Norwegian girl. Now Claudia studies English and German literature and linguistics, and North American Studies at the Free University of Berlin. We both share our love for foreign cultures and languages. Who knows if this family tradition at FSSW will continue?

Lenon Beeson Remembers

I arrived at Friends' School in the middle of the last century, that is in 1950. A young teacher, in my first permanent job. There were about 300 pupils, mixed in every way – gender, class, background, boarders and day scholars, genteel and deprived. Cooperation with Essex Education Authority meant that we had day pupils from the town and the villages, parents who were shopkeepers, workers and managers from local industry, even some London commuters. Several of the teaching and other staff – gardeners, groundsmen, maintenance – had children in the School so, for most occasions, there were strong town-School links. A few other LEAs sent us pupils from difficult or deprived backgrounds – even a few refugees or other social 'casualties' from the recent war.

One or two memories from Staff Meetings will illustrate our concerns. There was a debate about how many 'problem' children we could take without creating instability. Fortunately, sometimes the 'problems' became the stable influences. On another occasion, a supremely kind colleague described a pupil as 'a bit of a pudding', a remark which led Headmaster, Gerald Littleboy, to say, in a rare fit of anger, "Will you remember that somebody loves these children?"

It was a good school. Of course, not every pupil thought so all the time, and maybe a few never thought so. However, most pupils would only have one school experience, while most teachers are able to make comparisons. One teacher, Kenneth Whitlow, taught all the youngest children as they entered the School. He had wide interests, from drama to sport, and was able to seek out the strengths and capabilities of each pupil, ensuring that children met teachers who could develop their skills, in classes or in clubs. In a small school, it was essential that scholars took part in several activities – sport, music, drama, debates, creative clubs – in addition to classroom work.

It was, in my opinion, a civilised and tolerant school, where pupils

seemed able to respect and accept the eccentric. In 1952, we celebrated the 250th Anniversary of the School's foundation, with, among other events, performances of 'The Pageant'. For me, and for many pupils without much previous knowledge of the Quaker 'Unbroken Community', this celebration emphasised the ethos of the School. The tolerance, I noted, relied upon the underlying faith and humanity of staff and pupils who were Friends.

I am sure it was easier, in the less affluent and less worldly 1950s, to run a boarding school than it is today. Though we all had good links with town and Meeting House, there were inevitably times when our community felt a very closed group. There were rare occasions when a pupil ran away – obviously a serious matter. The Head went out in his car in pursuit of one escapee, along a road thought to be a likely escape route. The incident ended, probably happily, when the girl tried to thumb a lift from the Head.

As with all communities, there were local rituals – particularly the promenading down The Avenue in groups or in couples*. It was rumoured that Jennie Ellinor warned the girls about holding hands, "because you don't know what it leads to." I can certainly vouch for the fact that a young Old Scholar married couple met me while wheeling their young child down The Avenue in a pushchair and said, "Look what holding hands led to."

Long lasting friendships of all sorts are the most important achievement of any school, and I am grateful for those that I formed.

I have avoided, for the most part, mentioning names of the Staff. I can say, however, that, as a group, they were the best set of colleagues I ever worked with. As to pupils, teachers are not permitted to have favourites, so I will not refer to any living people. We all accept that for a parent to lose a child is grievous blow, but for a teacher to live longer than his pupils is also painful. So I remember, with much sadness, but some delight, five boys – Tom Marriage, Malcolm Harvey, David Greenland, Chris Eames and Brian Gatward. Girls live longer!

*The Couple System

This is, amazingly, the first mention of the couple system in this book and yet 'being a couple with . . .' was the way in which our personal relationships with individuals of the opposite sex were legitimated. I do not know when the couple system started, but it was in place the whole of my ten years. Its results are clearly recorded in photograph albums. Nowadays, sociologists might recognise it as a form of self-regulation, and it was clearly accepted both by individuals and the wider school society and almost

certainly ensured that such relationships were kept within bounds (there were no pregnancies).

Its pattern in my time was that (usually) a boy wrote a letter to a girl, asking her to be a couple with him. If she accepted, they would spend spare time together – walking up and down The Avenue at recess and after meals, sitting together in the Library, using the far side of the playing-field for some privacy in summer or sneaking into the darkened dining-room on winter evenings. Especially, they would enjoy Saturday evening dances.

Some relationships were ephemeral, some longer lasting and some culminated in marriage. Conventional barriers were broken in the sense that a girl in the Lower 5th could be a couple with a boy in the Upper 6th and, more unusually, a boy in the Lower 5th was a couple with a girl in the Upper 6th. Being chucked, the term for ending the relationship, did cause some grief, but mainly my memories of my many partners are very friendly (and it was quite special to meet some of them again at the 1995 reunion).

Naomi Sargant

Stanley Pumphrey & John Skelton, 1947

My father died suddenly and tragically in August 1947. My brother Ted and I had restarted at Walden at the beginning of the following term – he to Junior School and me (I think) to Lower Three. Some time in September, on what must have been one of the first Sunday evening assemblies of term, the school was singing the lovely naval hymn, *Eternal father, strong to save*, and memories came flooding back and the agony and grief over my father's recent death became too hard to bear. I remember Stanley Pumphrey stepping down from the platform, where he had been sitting alongside Gerald Littleboy, Jennie Ellinor and Margaret Yapp (the School's Senior Staff).

He beckoned me outside and I wondered whether I was to be remonstrated for disturbing assembly, but we went up to his study in the Masters Block where he lit his pipe and talked – he talked of my father's school days and of the School itself and of the happy times that might lie ahead for me. Later the same evening, much cheered after my meeting with GSP, and after declaring that I had 'washed and cleaned my teeth, Sir' to the master on duty (probably BBJ), I arrived in Bedroom Six, the largest and most junior of the boys' gas-lit bedrooms. Here I met John Skelton, a year older than me and generally acknowledged to be leader of the junior occupants of that bedroom. He marched purposely up to me clutching a model plane. "You can play with this if you want," he said, handing it to me, and my remaining seven very happy years at Walden had commenced.

Robert Dunstan

The Night the Sky Fell In . . . Or did it?

My first term at FSSW (50s), I shared a small room at the back, right up under the eaves. One night I woke in terror at the dreadful noise just over my head. There was quite a storm blowing. In fear and trembling, I went to waken a member of staff, who slept a few doors away. It was not a popular move and I was told "Don't be such a silly girl. Fancy disturbing me in the middle of the night. Go back to bed. There's nothing wrong." With difficulty, I eventually dropped off into a troubled sleep.

The next morning the cause of the noise was all too evident. The bedroom windows were thick with grime and, outside, a huge pile of tiles from the roof above our heads filled the playground below. Elsewhere, pieces of masonry and ceiling had come down. Fortunately no one had been hurt. It was a considerable number of years before I overcame my fears of howling gales at night, when in bed, trying to sleep.

A few years later, something similar happened, but not nearly so frightening. One evening; I think it was in the summer, I was in the assembly hall with many others, listening to one of the many excellent subscription concerts we used to have there. I no longer remember the exact details of ensemble playing or the music. However, when the flautist (if my memory serves me, it was certainly a woodwind) was playing a high note, there was a deafening roar and a thud, followed by a big cloud of dust and a loud bang. The musicians paused in their playing and the entire audience held their breath; a large piece of ceiling had fallen to the floor at the back of the stage, just behind the musicians. When everyone realised what had happened and that no one was hurt, the musicians continued from exactly where they had left off, to finish the piece of music they were playing. As you can imagine, the applause at the end was rapturous. Apparently, when the boarders' trunks had been stored in the loft space overhead, those putting them had been a little rough to say the least and loosened the ceiling.

Gillian Lampard

Do you remember . . .

- Playing 'Tin Can Tommy' in the Bumble Dinkies, there are classrooms there now.
- Playing waves amongst the bushes on the far side of the field.
- Walking up The Avenue and kicking the gate – later replaced by a stone – the New Avenue was not open in those days!
- Sunday afternoon the girls had to rest on their beds while the boys had to go for a walk.
- Later on the older girls were allowed to go for a walk after taking a rest, needless to say we met the boys.
- Merit halves and if you were lucky a Merit whole. A complete day off school!

What fun we had with Kelvin Osborn and Aggie Horlick who were our long suffering form teachers. We went to the 'swing beeches', a toy factory and a farm just to mention a few.

- Birthday parties on the long table under the balcony.
- Lining up to have our hair 'bug-raked' by Miss Hull.
- Is bread and butter still known as 'chaff and tack'?
- Drying our hair in front of the gas fire!
- Bath water up as far as the blue line – five inches.

Diane Hollingbery

Amnesty at FSSW

John Evans

I taught at the school from 1958 to 1965. I was not a Quaker, and did not contribute to the religious life of the School. Towards the end of my stay, the Headmaster, Kenneth Nicholson, told the staff that he had been talking to Peter Benenson (think that was the name) who was in the process of founding a new 'Amnesty' movement, and wondered if someone might like to begin a group in the School. No one else seemed to be interested, and my own friends outside the School were strongly cynical – just pie-in-the-sky idealism of well-meaning but misguided people. However, I expressed a tentative interest, and arranged a first meeting with not the faintest idea of what we would do. Hopefully there would be an informal chat with two or three enthusiasts. To my surprise, almost the whole of the sixth form attended, and the hall had been set out for me like an international conference. The only thing to do was to let as many people as possible have a say, and try to be a little more prepared next time.

In due course, we received three names: one was Helen Joseph, under house arrest in South Africa, another was a Greek political prisoner, and there was some French connection with the third. Helen wrote us charming letters, seemingly more concerned about us than her own condition. The Greek Embassy reasonably asked us why we thought we had a right to question their credentials when they had given civilisation and democracy to the world. The third I remember little about, except for discussions with the language staff about formal French correspondence. Quite naturally, we failed to have any direct impact. Our only achievement was a little local publicity through two musical concerts and a jumble sale.

Soon after these early beginnings, I left teaching, and Amnesty went out of my life. But strangely, bit by bit, year by year, I noticed Amnesty gaining ground in the universities, and becoming steadily more influential. Outraged governments began to feel it necessary to deride its activities, while humanitarian agencies, even the UN, began to take note of their reports. Not that I cared for the international lawyers who came in very much later, and tried to switch the emphasis from releasing prisoners to setting up war crimes tribunals who would dispose a victor's justice - that was never the intention. But attending Cyril Mummery's commemoration service last year, I was greatly heartened when I found myself facing a few of those dedicated pupils who, unlike the quitters like myself, had stayed the course, and helped to develop a truly international organisation.

I hope the School will recognise in some suitable way those sixth formers who persevered against the odds with something that surely goes to the heart of Quaker tradition and its religious values.

The Weather Girls of 1953



Preparing a weather report: l-r Ann Wickenden, Janet Smith, Janet Rice, Jane Goodrich
Photo John Skelton

In 1953/4, Ann Wickenden, Janet Rice, Janet Smith and myself took part in a weather project. We measured the rain, minimum and maximum temperatures etc, etc. For General Meeting 1953, we mounted a display for which we won ten shillings (I can't recall whether this was in total or whether we each received ten shillings).

I think that lasting friendships say much about a school. For ten years, Janet Smith, Ann Wickenden, Patricia Chuter and I, without our men, spent a sunny week's holiday together. We have now known each other for fifty years and it is a very satisfying feeling.

Jane Goodrich

Saturday Evening Entertainment

This took the form of talks and slide shows, some very interesting, eg one by the London taxi driver.

Films (about three per term) – no TV then! – School Dances
Special occasions like the School Play – Choir and Orchestra
End of Term Concerts which were always great fun, including the old School Song, as well as old favourites like *Riding Down from Bangor* and, usually, skits on the staff. **Pat & Donn Webb**

It was a balmy summer's night in 1979. Too warm to sleep comfortably and even with the dormitory windows wide open one could only dream about the benefits of modern air conditioning.

Some time after midnight, still unable to sleep, I heard the noise of people running towards the girl's end of the School along the asphalt between the Avenue and main school building. As my bed was immediately adjacent to the open window I looked outside to see a number of people disappearing out of sight talking in hushed tones. Clearly, they shouldn't have been there and were up to no good. I woke up my friend and dormitory colleague Michael Fenton and he too heard the noises of people outside. By now they were outside the girl's playroom and, although out of sight, could still be heard. Being responsible Sixth Formers, we decided that our unwelcome guests were almost certainly teenage boys from the town and, suspecting that their intentions were less than honourable, we agreed to alert the Duty Master at the boys' end.

Peter Arter was the Duty Master that evening and, needless to say, he was not happy about being woken up. However, once we had explained what we had heard and seen, he decided to phone the Headmaster and asked us to accompany him to the girls' dormitories to make sure that all was in order.

Who could possibly turn down an 'official' opportunity to explore the girls' dormitories at night!

By now it was at least one o'clock in the morning, and the three of us walked down the boys' staircase, along central corridor and up the stairs towards the girls' dormitory. It

The Night We Saved the Girls' Honour

as remembered by
NIGEL McTEAR



must have been a strange sight – the three of us, dressed in pyjamas and dressing gowns, creeping around in the middle of the night. Michael Fenton was over 6ft 4ins tall, Peter Arter was 5ft 4ins and I am just under 5ft 8ins. The only thing we had in common was a lack of ability to defend ourselves if presented with an intruder, so it was not clear what we would do if we did find anyone who shouldn't have been there.

By now the girls' Duty Mistress, Jean Stubbs, was also on the scene and, after checking a number of dormitories without event, together we approached the Barn Dormitory door. This was the only dormitory which can be easily accessed from the back of the school as its windows are just four or five feet above the top of the girls playroom lobby roof. It was obvious that, if we were to find intruders, this was going to be the place.

As we slowly opened the door mayhem pursued. We hit the lights to be presented with five or six teenage boys who, to our enormous relief, appeared more afraid of us than we did of them – little did they know! Four of them made a dive for the open window that they had entered from and quickly made their getaway. However, two of them in their moment of panic, decided to make a run for the dormitory door which involved passing within inches of where we were standing.

It was one of those situations where you simply could not believe what was happening. It all happened so fast. There was no time to think. It's a cliché but it was them or us.

Anyone who knew Michael would know that he would have difficulty harming a fly let alone another human being but, to my complete surprise, I saw a different side to him that night. He grabbed the two intruders, pinned them firmly but with restraint against the wall and suggested that it was in their interest to stand still or he might have to kill them. How exactly he intended to do this was less than clear but it had the desired affect and they stayed rooted to the spot looking up at this 6ft 4ins giant of a Sixth Former. For my part, I was ready to defend the honour of the School (not to mention the girls involved) but Michael had

the situation covered, so fortunately my role was reduced to one of moral support only.

Fortunately, the lives of these intruders were saved by the arrival of the Headmaster (John Woods), supported by the local police. With the situation under control, the intruders were taken away and Michael and myself, feeling somewhat proud with ourselves, went back to bed.

In the morning, at breakfast, the excitement of the night before had somehow become common knowledge and, as Michael and I entered the Dining Hall, we were greeted by clapping – what heroes!

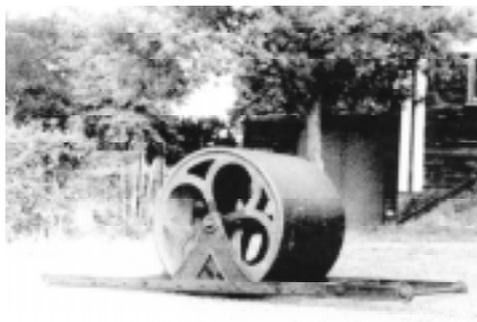
Questions like what these people were doing there in the first place, what their intentions were and what would have happened had they not been challenged remain unanswered to this day.

Buoyed up by our new hero status, Michael and I stood in that year's School Election, to coincide with the General Election, under the dream ticket of Batman and Robin. Obviously, our mandate involved the saving of teenage girls from the perils of uninvited guests as well as a wider platform of other super-hero attributes! Given Michael's 6ft 4ins frame and dark hair and my more compact dimensions and ginger hair I will leave it for you to decide who was Batman and who was Robin! To our surprise we came third behind the main two parties.

As far as we know, the youths questioned by the police were let off with a caution and the incident passed into the folklore of the school to rest with many other anecdotes, some of which appear in this excellent book.

Mark Bertram

Long, balmy, irresponsible summer evenings in the first year of the sixth form in the late 1950s. Four of us could not resist tweaking the tail of the cricketing establishment and our mischief fell on the venerable roller (still going strong, I notice). We would turn it upside down. Except that would be impossible. So we would make it appear to have been turned upside down. Out came the penetrating oil several nights running to be applied to the large rusty bolts joining the axle to the frame. Then one night out came some big spanners and the work of taking the frame off, turning it over and re-attaching it, upside down,



to the axle was quite quick. Next morning, gasps of horror and admiration, depending on cricketing orientation.

The Head, Kenneth Nicholson, complained to the whole sixth form about how the roller could have been broken by being turned upside down but he had the good sense not to go for the pranksters. I can now give their names, because they are written on the back of my commemorative photo: Ian Drummond, John Elsdon, Peter Fraenkel and Mark Bertram. The Head asked philosophically why, if vandalism was going to become a problem, he should not mount machine guns watching over our activities. "Expense, Sir?" suggested Oliver Weaver.

James Hawkes

I was a scholar between 1985 and 1992, not sure I can recall any significant developments except staff cutbacks and after many years, J C Woods leaving. The school band (Void, I think) performed a deafening rendition of Go Jonny Go in assembly, preceded and followed by the silence of worship. I remember the Five Day Week being introduced. I think Collect for Assembly disappeared at this time for the younger years.

I was in the last group at Gibson House before it briefly turned into mixed accommodation for the first and second years. When it was abandoned we had to return there for a term during the sixth form as Hillcroft was made 'Fire Safe' which completely devalued it, only for it to be put on the market a year or two later. During the time I was at School many irreversible decisions were made, The land at Friends Walk (allotments by the Scout Hut), Most of the Young Farmers field, Robins Acre including its long garden an orchard and the old Bursar's House were sold off, probably without much long term gain. Hillcroft was superb as a mixed Boarding House although there was little hijinks between the 1st and 2nd floor - well, none that I participated in!

Scouts run by John Capper was great fun, and with just enough discipline, very beneficial. One of the more popular activities was lighting a fire in the boughs of a tree behind the scout hut and cooking baked beans and tea on it.

One superb anecdote concerned Jane Laing and Gavin Parnaby during the trip behind the Iron Curtain around 1991.

Jane Laing seeing the amount of drink in Gavin's glass (Gavin was a big chap) exclaimed as the lift doors separated them "Gavin, That's far too much Vodka!" By the time they met in the lobby (I think), Gavin having taken the stairs, the Glass was drained to avoid confiscation. Jane of course went on to be the Head Teacher (I am sure she was very sound).

The Present Generation

We invited six current Sixth Formers to tell us how they feel about the School as it is now and their hopes for the future. Two girls, both day scholars, and four boys, all boarders, took part in the survey. They are studying for their A Levels in subjects varying from the traditional English and History, Physics, Chemistry and Biology, to more modern courses such as General Studies, Key Skills, Sport, Drama and Film Studies. They are all active in sport and one hopes to make sport his career.

Two of our respondents followed siblings into the School and the decision to attend in all cases was taken jointly with their parents. Only one comes from a Quaker family whose

parents are Old Scholars and one has decided to join the Society of Friends as a result of his experiences at the School and participating in such activities as the Quaker Pilgrimage.

An overwhelming impression to be gained from their answers is the importance to them of the Quaker ethos, also the fact that the School is co-educational and multi-ethnic. While some feel the limitations of being in a small community, they feel that their experiences of variety in their environment give them a good foundation for coping with adult life.

Here are the questions we asked with examples of the replies we received.

How does a Quaker school differ from others?

All obviously gain a sense of calm and community:

The silent assemblies and emphasis on silence and peace within a person. The small, close community spirit and feel (*girl*). It has a distinct atmosphere which I have never explained satisfactorily, but it is there (*boy*). The whole atmosphere and ethos of the School is calm and relaxed. There is little sense of hierarchy between the year groups (*girl*). The relaxed atmosphere gives you a chance to develop completely, naturally. Nothing is forced down you (*boy*). I believe that Friends' School, Saffron Walden, perhaps more than other Friends' Schools, holds to the Quaker ethos well. That is not to say that Quaker traditions are forced on to us. The Quaker ethos is seen running through the community of the School almost unnoticed (*boy*). The sense of community (*boy*).

Is it important that the School is co-educational?

This is extremely important to all:

One boy goes as far as to say single sex is artificial, surreal and full of cliques. Both girls feel they learn to co-operate with each other and reach levels of toleration which prepare them for later life, for university and the world of work, also to see how the opposite sex feels on certain issues. They also feel they will be better able to bond with people of both sexes.

It is important to achieve a well rounded and tolerant outlook to life and this must include interaction between the sexes (*boy*). Other boys' comments: some of my best friends are women; a part of me wouldn't grow. You get to know how to treat women.

What about the School's location and setting?

What some see as calm, others see, perhaps, as dull:

In a traditional, small town with a Quaker following within, likened to the atmosphere

of the School, fairly quiet and spacious setting and surroundings (*girl*). The School's grounds give it a great setting (*boy*).

'Beautiful' fails to sum up the School, both in its setting and ethos (*boy*). The town of Saffron Walden may lack in excitement and verve, but makes up for it with a natural calm and friendly feeling in the community. The Friends' School grounds show their true beauty during the summer months (*boy*). Fairly good – close to London, Bishops Stortford and Cambridge. Saffron Walden could have more stuff for people our age (bowling etc).

What do you think of the School's facilities, buildings etc.

... what some see as tradition, others regard as behind the times:

Mostly very old style and characteristic. Main building still holds an old and traditional feel, whilst the outbuildings are more modern and practical for modern day teaching (*girl*). In general they are good – the buildings are nice (*girl*).

The grounds are nice, facilities are

adequate for a small school. The School's facilities are adequate for such a small school. Its IT facilities are constantly improving as the School reacts to the need for young people to improve their capabilities in this area. Sports, good; Classes, good; Grounds, nice. Could do with a weights room but overall good. (*boys*)

Is this school multicultural?

All respondents agree that the School is multicultural and inclusive:

The girls... Yes, definitely! There are members of all cultures and nations from all over the world and all are easily mixed into the community and school life. Definitely – this school gives you a good opportunity to mix and interact with people from all over the world.

And the boys... Yes, it is multicultural. There are a large number of cultures represented and no tensions between them. Yes, the cultures come from all over the world, from Buddhists to Quakers to Jews, from every corner of the world. To say that Friends' is multicultural is an understatement. The presence of so many cultures gives the School a special, unique community. Each culture adds its theme to the community. Yes, you get to learn about different cultures.

Is being a boarder different from being a day scholar?

Not really much difference, although boarders tend to be closer to each other as they spend 24 hours a day together in the closed environment (*girl*). In the Sixth Form there is not so much difference, but lower down the School there is a kind of a divide slightly between boarders and day pupils (*boy*). I'm a day scholar and during lesson time there is not much of a divide, but at other times it is more noticeable (*girl*). I have been both a day

scholar and a boarder. There is a great difference. This is my home. I spend most of my time here. I care about it. There isn't a divide between the two but our approach is different (*boy*). In general, boarders form closer relationships with each other than with day scholars. However, the Friends' community is a flowing entity that constantly changes with the people present at the time. Certainly being a boarder gives you the opportunity to be more involved with all of school life (*boy*). In years Seven to Eleven there is more of a divide between the two. Boarding makes you more independent and prepares you for life out of school (*boy*).

Is the Sixth Form experience different from that of lower years?

All are of one voice on this subject:

It is much nicer in the Sixth Form! You get more of a sense of freedom and being responsible for yourself, treated more 'grown-up'. There are many more privileges – recess, snacks, larger/better common room areas, getting lunch first – always (*girl*). A far greater sense of freedom. This comes from private study periods as well as a greater level of privileges out of School (*boy*). Sixth Form has given me more freedom to be how I want. It has also taught me to be more self-motivated and disciplined with my work (*girl*). It's good. You become closer as a year. You're treated differently by the staff and lower years, mostly you gain respect (*boy*). The Sixth Form is a vastly more enjoyable experience than lower years. Sixth Form students are allowed much more freedom of movement. We are allowed to leave the School grounds at recess, lunchtime and between 8.30 and 10.00. In the Sixth Form, the reduction in the size of year group really pulls together an already close community (*boy*). You get a better relation-

ship with Staff and more freedom. You have free periods and get into lunch early (*boy*).

Leisure, time out of School?

Chatting to everybody – mostly my year group in Croydon House Common Room, watching videos, playing pool, computer room, mostly in groups of people, not on your own (*girl*). Talking with other pupils and in spite of the small year groups, the social life is good (*boy*). Either socialising with other members of the School, doing sport, work. The social life is quite good (*girl*). Talking, drinking coffee and working and eating toast. My social life is good. It's a very tight community (*boy*). I spend most of my free time gathering with other students in social areas of the School. The social life of the School is the successful factor that holds together its community (*boy*). Social life good – lots of socialising done in town. Free time watching television, computer etc (*boy*).

How are your relations with the Staff?

Generally they are quite good and there is a great deal of co-operation. Obviously it's not like that with every student teacher, but that's to be expected (*girl*). Broadly they are very good and close (*boy*). They get better in the Sixth Form (*girl*). Very good – one of the best things about the School (*boy*). The small class sizes allow student/staff relationships to reach a higher level of friendship whilst also keeping a degree of respect (*boy*). Very good (*boy*).

What have been the high points of your time at the School?

Mostly respondents cite good exam results, sporting achievements or achieving promotion within the School. Other highlights have been the School balls and entertainments, the Quaker Pilgrimage. . . and: seeing Sarah Evans fall over in Assembly! (boy)

... and the low points?

Not many, it seems, however:

Things have got a bit claustrophobic and difficult at times, due to the very small number of people in each year group (*girl*). The way the Sixth Form is so small. Even though I truly love these guys, you can easily become claustrophobic (*boy*). The School seems to reach its low point just after Christmas, the weather remains damp and cold and Christmas is long over (*boy*).

What do you like most about the School?

All agree on this – words such as atmosphere, relaxed, calm and community abound. The Quaker ethos and multi ethnicity are cited, the wonderful environment of the grounds in summer and, as one boy says: All of it really.

What do you like least about the School?

It can get very cold in winter before the heating is turned on – especially in the older parts!! The limited number of subjects offered (especially at A-level) (*girl*). Late in the terms it can become boring as everyone has said everything that want to say to each other and need a break (*boy*). Because people are so close, it can get too claustrophobic (not physically) (*girl*). If you have a secret, it is 90% sure to get out (*boy*). The grounds in winter and the lack of personal space are the most irritating features of the School (*boy*). And it seems there is still a problem which was experienced in the 40s – there are occasional incidents of theft.

How would you like the School to develop in the future?

I hope it continues to improve with age and keeps up to modern day standards. Also that the continuance of effectively dealing with issues such as bullying and difficult pupils is maintained as it is a school environment in which these have been and can be effectively controlled. Additions to and

continued modernisation of facilities (*girl*).

I would like to see it grow and continue to prosper (*boy*). I would like to see pupils being able to express themselves more freely, ie through their dress (*girl*). I would like the diversity to grow, mainly in the subjects taught, but also in the people attending Friends'. Oh, and of course, more boarders (*boy*). I would like to see the School show more interaction with other schools, perhaps with other Friends' Schools. Ideas for an exchange with a school in Ireland being reinstated is just the thing that I believe the School needs. I would like the School to continue to develop but also to retain to the spirit of Quakerism in the community which, I feel, is the backbone of the School (*boy*). The majority of students are happy here and it would be a shame if they were not. Sports teams to improve so I can play a good First Eleven as an Old Scholar (*boy*).

How has the School changed since you have been here?

The turnover of staff during the years covered has been the biggest cause for concern among the respondents:

The uniform has changed and it has gone through phases of popularity (ie intake in students). Many new additions, facilities, improvements to Swimming Pool, Teachers (*girl*). Head Teacher has changed three times. Subjects have moved many times, but broadly the School has retained the same feeling for me (*boy*). The Headship has changed three times and therefore the feel of the School changes too (*girl*). Staff have come and gone (mostly gone), refurbishment which was nice (*boy*). The facilities of the School have improved all the time, including the Swimming Pool, Science Labs and IT facilities. The School also seems to have a high staff turnover (*boy*). Stricter, interior has improved, different Teachers, Tennis Courts (*boy*).

First Impressions in 2001

Having only been at Walden since January 2001, I know little about the School's rich history. However, while I may not know much about its past, I have certainly learned a lot about its present.

My husband, Brian, and I moved down from Scotland, having just left very long term teaching posts to take over responsibility for Boys' and Girls' House, as well as the duties of Boarding Co-ordinator. From the first day we arrived, we have been made to feel so welcome by absolutely everybody – every member of Staff, no matter what their station, and all the Pupils. The support and assistance we have received have been very much appreciated. People have tolerated our beginners' lack of knowledge and have helped us through more than one or two rather difficult situations.

The accommodation we have been given, as obviously we have to live on site, is wonderful. We live in the Tower Flat – what a misnomer! Well, yes, it is in the Tower of the School but, rest assured, it is anything but flat. From the living area, you have to climb 38 ever narrowing steps to the Guest Bedroom – I wonder if this is why guests rarely outstay their welcome?

When we first visited the School for our interview, we felt it had a warm and friendly atmosphere. We reckoned that we could be happy here, even though it meant leaving our children and grandchildren back in Scotland. Our initial impressions have been confirmed many times. The Quaker ethos helps new staff and pupils to feel at home very quickly and to feel valued, no matter what they are doing. This atmosphere is not present in all schools, but it is one which should certainly be encouraged everywhere – it really does make a difference.

Moir Thomson

Friends' Junior School – a recent venture with a new Head

Friends' Junior School opened as Gibson House in 1992 in the premises built originally as the school sanatorium in 1925. It was expanded in 1995 to include a Nursery.

Starting with an intake of just fifteen, there are now 171 children at the School and a two-form entry is planned for 2002.

As well as the traditional subjects, the curriculum takes in craft, design and technology, information computer technology and personal, social and health education. The range of sports is wide – football, netball, cross-country, hockey, swimming, cricket, rounders, athletics, tennis and new image rugby. Afternoon clubs take place after school and there are lunchtime activities including recorder, saxophone and string groups and a choir.

New Head, Andrew Holmes grew up in Norfolk and attended Hammonds Grammar School, Swaffham and Wymondham College before moving to Bath to complete a Cert Ed. His first appointment was at Kent College, a coeducational day and boarding school in Canterbury. While in Canterbury he took a BEd(Hons) at the University of Kent. He was then appointed Head of Mathematics at Oswestry Junior School, a prep-school in Shropshire and from here he moved to Dame Bradbury's School in Saffron Walden as Deputy Head. He took up the post of Head of Friends' Junior School in 2001.



He has been married to Sue, who is also a teacher in Saffron Walden, for 25 years. They have two children, Ben (eighteen) who is at University of Wales, and Beth (eleven) who is at Newport Grammar School.

Andrew has always been a keen sportsman and has regularly played rugby, football and golf. He has played cricket for Somerset Second Eleven, and other League teams. He still plays village cricket.

He arrives at FSSW at a challenging and exciting time – a new Head for the Senior School, an Inspection by the Independent Schools Inspectorate and the School's Tercentenary celebrations all coming within his first year.

He finds that the School has a very distinct ethos and a special sense of history which is being specially highlighted in the Tercentenary year. Together with everybody else at the School, he looks forward, with optimism and confidence to the next one hundred years.

Still Inclusive, Still Thriving

There are many ethnic groups in school at present: Asian (Hong Kong Chinese, mainland Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Sri Lankan, Thai, Indian, Pakistani); Afro Caribbean (Trinidad, Jamaica); African (Ghana, Cameroun, Kenya, Sudan, Guyana), Hispanic (Brazil, Mexico); European non-English (Ukrainian, Turkish, German, French). Many different religious backgrounds are also represented.

Twenty-nine pupils do not have English as their first language (9% of school population) and there are in total around 40 pupils (12% of pop.) from 21 countries other than the UK.

There are 162 children aged over eleven in the School of whom 75 are boarders. There are 172 children aged under eleven but none of these board.

Boarding nationally has been in decline until this year, when numbers ceased falling for the first time in a decade. There are many contributory factors; a cultural backlash against boarding in the late 80s and early 90s; many parents now have no experience of boarding and do not consider it as an option; improved transport systems and higher levels of car ownership make boarding less 'necessary' than before. Cost is also a factor – schools have been required by law (especially in *The Children Act 1989*) to make boarding provision more private, secure and luxurious, hence the costs have risen dramatically. A senior school boarding place at FSSW now costs in the region of £14,700 a year – over £100,000 for the seven years of Senior education. 'Flexible' boarding is now the norm in most schools, where a large number of boarding pupils are only in school from Monday night to Thursday night and are at home every weekend. This is particularly common in suburban/rural areas like Saffron Walden, where most London based boarders would be unable to go home on a daily basis but can comfortably make the journey in 90 minutes on a Friday night.

New Head, **Andy Waters**, feels that boarding may well have a slow return to popularity, especially amongst families where both partners work full-time in order (in many cases) to pay the school fees. 'Convenience' boarding is thus becoming a mini-phenomenon. He doubts, however, if boarding will ever return to the levels seen in the 50s and 60s when it was culturally acceptable to send your eight year old off to school. He doubts the validity of the so-called 'Harry Potter' effect (children choosing to board at a young age because of the books and films showing boarding in a good light). He would welcome some proper research into why children really choose to board – if, indeed, it is their choice and not that of their parents.

A New Head for a New Century



Andy Waters was born in Coventry in 1957 and was educated at a West London

boys' grammar school. After studying languages at 'A' Level, he gained a B.Ed. (Hons) degree in Physical Education and History at Borough Road College before taking up his first teaching appointment (1980) in a large and challenging maintained school in Camberwell, London. In 1984 Andy moved to North Wales to become a management tutor and mountaineering specialist at the Outward Bound School (Aberdyfi), where he was also a member of the North Wales Mountain Rescue Organisation.

In 1987 Andy returned to teaching and became Head of Physical Education at St. Christopher School, (Letchworth). He and Hazel were married in 1988, and ran a succession of co-educational boarding houses whilst continuing to teach PE and History. Andy completed an in-service MA in Educational Management in 1996 and was appointed Deputy Headmaster of Oswestry School (Shropshire) in September 1997. After four years of valuable experience, during which time he was responsible for pastoral care, staff professional development and the day-to-day administration of the school, Andy was appointed to the Headship of Friends' School Saffron Walden in September 2001.

Andy and Hazel have two children, Bethan born in 1992 and Ryan in 1994. Both now enthusiastically attend the Junior School at Friends'; Hazel, a qualified primary school teacher, is currently working as a teaching assistant in Cambridge. Andy retains a love of music and has played guitars in a number of working ceildh bands in the past fifteen years. He also competes in triathlon events over a range of distances, and escapes back to the mountains with his family to ski and climb whenever the opportunity arises.

Here he outlines his hopes for the future of the School.

A Vision for the Future

I am very proud to have been appointed Head of Friends' School at such an important time in its history. Andrew Holmes (the new Head of Junior House) and I have an exciting and challenging task ahead of us, but we have the security of knowing that the School has strong foundations underneath it, and a tangible ethos based on its Quaker roots which has stood the tests of time over the past three hundred years. The School already has a fine site, dedicated staff, supportive parents and governors, and a body of enthusiastic pupils; it will be our job to take these assets and shape them in such a way that the future of the School is assured.

My priorities for 2001/2002 have, to a great extent, been pre-determined. The School undergoes its Independent Schools' Inspectorate Inspection in February 2002, and will celebrate its Tercentenary in May and September. A new prospectus is planned, and modifications to the changing rooms to enhance the work done on the Swimming Pool will begin in the summer. Where, though, might we be in five years' time? On my appointment to the Headship I gave a presentation to the Governors outlining my vision for Friends' School, and I should like to share this with readers of this volume.

The School will continue to be both a day and boarding establishment, firmly guided by Quaker beliefs and principles, serving a diverse intake of around 380 children. These children will not be exclusively selected by academic ability, and will range in age from 3 to 18. The School will seek to harness the inner potential of every child through a wide variety of academic, creative, sporting and cultural opportunities, and it will be staffed by dedicated and committed educationalists who understand that teaching is a day-long, week-long, life long process. Pupils from every race, creed and cultural background will be equally welcomed and valued.

The School will be financially sound without being wasteful, and will have undergone a successful inspection and a positive reinforcement of its history and underlying principles during the Tercentenary celebrations. Its buildings will be enhanced, and its spaces better utilised for the benefit of pupils. It will be better known locally and nationally, and will seek to strengthen the bonds between current and past scholars as well as with local schools. It will be well informed about educational change, prepared to respond to new initiatives and capable of the flexibility which an ever-changing educational world requires. Vitally, it will stand ready and able to serve the needs of children as it has done since 1702.

I like to think of the School as a diamond; old and precious, and treasured by those who share ownership of it. Like all diamonds, though, it will benefit from some polishing and from being allowed to shine in a different setting. Andrew and I look forward to guiding the polishing, and enhancing the setting of our diamond as we lead it into its fourth century.

Andy Waters
February 2002