Alumni News

THE NEWSLETTER FOR LUCKLEY ALUMNI AUTUMN 2016 ISSUE 2

LUCKLEY REUNION 2017

At last it's time to start planning the third Luckley Reunion, this time for all pupils who left Luckley-Oakfield between 1990 and 2010. The date is set for Saturday 1 July 2017 - invitations and details of the day will be sent out early next year, but in the meantime be sure to save the date and make sure your old classmates are in touch with the alumni office to be on the invitation list.

The invitation will also go to any staff who were teaching during that period, who I am sure will enjoy meeting their past pupils and hearing what they have been up to since leaving Luckley.

THE CLASS OF 2016

In July the Class of 2016 left Luckley Sixth Form, becoming the newest Alumni members. Nearly all of the girls were successful in being offered their first choice for university. This year they have spread all around the UK studying a wide range of subjects, from Law in Stirling, to Marine Biology in Swansea, Architecture in Nottingham to Archaelogy and History in Southampton.

We wish them all the best, and look forward to hearing how they get on. Hopefully next year they will come back to school to support the Year 12 Pre U Week and tell them all about their first year beyond Luckley.

THE TASSIE FOURSOMES

In June, four ladies represented Luckley Alumni in an annual golf tournament for alumni of independent girls' schools, held at The Berkshire Golf Club, Ascot. The team was made up of Robyn Duncan (2001), Nicky Weeks née Sargood (1986), Sue Holdship née Harrop(1984) and Barbara Paxton, the mother of Heather Paxton (2001). Barbara had stepped in at the last minute to replace Bridget Milling-Smith (1966) who had to pull out of the team following an injury.

Nicky wrote afterwards: "We had a super day, the courses were both in immaculate condition and our playing partners from Rodean were great company. Sadly we didn't bring home any silverware this year but we didn't let the school down entirely and got a respectable score. Thank you for a fabulous day Luckley House and Sue Hawkins for organising us and being there to support."

Barbara remembered taking groups of Luckley pupils to Downshire Golf Course in Bracknell for lessons when Heather was at school so was surprised that there were not more alumni who had continued to play – though she was delighted to have taken part herself and represented the school.

THE BERKSHIRE

The date for next year's competition is Monday 12 June 2017 – so if anyone would be interested in playing please contact the alumni office.

GOING OUT WITH A BANG!

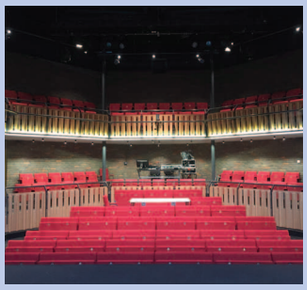
Sadly this year Mrs Cheryl Cook, the Technician in the Science department for the past 25 years, decided to hang up her lab coat for the last time. Before she left I asked her to write about her time at Luckley for the newsletter.

" I saw the advertisement for a Technician in the Wokingham Times in 1991 and, after an interview with David White the Bursar, was delighted to get the job working with Wendy Thomas. The Science Department then consisted of three labs and a small teaching room plus the 'Snug' – a book store where we also escaped to for our tea breaks. The teaching staff were Dr McLeod, Mrs Gadsby and Mrs Chaddock – and the four of us worked together for next 16 years until Mrs Gadsby retired in 2007, closely followed by the other two. Other science staff came and went during my time: Netty Shea, Di Mason, Jan Stewart, Jenny Woodfin, Kate Sage, Zoe Percival, Mike Sluman, Joan Wakeling, Joan Collette, Sarah Knowles and Vivienne Davis, plus Sue Hawkins, my assistant technician for six years, who is now the Alumni Co-ordinator. We saw many changes in the department, several changes of curriculum and exam structure, a large numbers of students studying all three sciences up to A Level and, just in the last few years, the long awaited refurbishment of the labs in Coggan House and the amazing new Prep Room. I loved every minute of my time at Luckley, seeing so many girls develop a love of science and being part of the Luckley family, so I am retiring with a certain sadness – although my connection with Luckley will continue as my daughter Nikki has replaced me in the Prep Room as Technician."

Cheryl's message prompted me to find some archive photos of the Science Department over the years – how it has changed!

THE WHITTY THEATRE

March saw the opening of The Whitty Theatre at Luckley, the wonderful new performing arts centre built on the site of the old swimming pool. The theatre has been named after the grandmother of the main benefactor. Mrs Cordery was delighted to move out of the Garden House drama studio, with it's wonky floor and erratic heating, into the state of the art classroom and all the facilities the theatre has to offer.



The theatre is available for private hire so it was particularly fitting that one of the first bookings came via a past pupil. Steph Still (2009) brought a colleague who runs Strictly Street Dance Company along to have a look as a possible venue for their Christmas dance show. She was amazed with the building, size of the stage, professional lighting and sound system, dressing rooms and support offered by the theatre manager and was very quick to book. She said "I absolutely love it and havebeen looking for a venue like this, in this area, for a long time."

The theatre puts on a wide range of performances which alumni are more than welcome to attend. Check out whats on at www.luckleyhouseschool.org/the-whitty-theatre/whats-on

FAREWELL TO STAFF

Sadly this year we have said goodbye to a several members of staff.

Madame McGonnell joined Luckley in 2008, initially as a TEFL teacher before joining the Languages Department to teach French and Spanish.
She held several leadership roles, before becoming Deputy Head in 2012.

Mrs Gathercole joined the RE Department in 2001. In addition to her teaching she was Head of Cornish House (Beatty) and also Charity Co-ordinator.
This summer saw her getting married and moving to Bristol with her new husband.

Although Mrs Mallett has only been teaching Maths at Luckley since 2011 she has been fully involved in all aspect of school life. Her Korean Cookery Club has been a firm favourite with the pupils and boarders.

Mrs Bull was originally at Luckley from 2002 to 2009, but then missed everyone so much she returned in 2012 to become Director of Music.
She has been responsible for some amazing musical performances and very involved with MTP.

Mrs Cook, the Science Technician, joined Luckley in 1991, so has been responsible for preparing hundreds of practical experiments over the years.
Goodness knows just how many test tubes she has washed in that time!

ALUMNI IN SCHOOL

This year a number of alumni have been in school, primarily taking part in the activities arranged for the Sixth Form as part of their Pre U Week, helping to prepare them for life after Luckley.

A group of recent leavers came in to talk about their first year at university, taking a gap year or starting an apprenticeship. Lara Bamfield talked about her sports scholarship at Iowa University, USA while Lucy Pritchard explained the apprenticeship route that she has taken.

Another group held practice interviews, a favourite session for the students. Alison Scott (1992), Katie Goodsell (2011), Bethany Guard (2003) and Dawn Tordoff (1992) grilled the students, asking some tricky questions but giving some very valuable feedback and tips to each interviewee.

The mentors' lunch was another successful visit for alumni, giving those who are mentoring a Sixth Former an opportunity to meet face to face and talk about how best they can support them through their last couple of years at Luckley. Other mentors who were unable to attend the lunch had Skype chats with their mentees or have arranged other opportunities to come in to school to meet them. The mentors who attended were Sarah Mapleston (2009), Jenny Mitchell (2010), Femke Okten née Leathes (1994), Sarah Hamilton (2007), Rhiannon Broad (2011), Rachael Gillham née McCall (1992) and Chelsea Crosson-Smith (2011).

The current students were lucky enough to have a presentation in the new Whitty Theatre from Cammy Potter (2011) who, having graduated from Royal Holloway, is now working in Student Recruitment and Admissions there. She gave valuable advice on the application process for university and the courses available at Royal Holloway.

The school are extremely grateful to all alumni who have given up their time to support our current students, They all commented on how much they have enjoyed meeting past pupils and sharing Luckley experiences.

70s and 80s REUNION - 25 JUNE 2016

In June, we invited back to Luckley anyone who had left school between 1970 and 1990. After the success of last year's reunion we hoped to increase the numbers slightly but were staggered when over 100 past pupils accepted. We were also delighted that a number of past staff came along including Mrs Creech, Miss Pornicott, Mrs Williams, Mr and Mrs Blake and Matron (Miss Stewart), who everyone was delighted to see.
The day was a huge success, with everyone enjoying meeting up with old friends and taking a trip down memory lane by visiting their old classrooms and boarding rooms.

All of the pictures from the day are available on the Alumni Website under the 'Galleries' tab.
Very sadly, I received an email from Alison Terry telling me that Debbie Milward née Over died suddenly just a few weeks after the reunion. She had been very unwell earlier in the year but had been expected to make a full recovery, so it was very tragic news. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.

ALUMNI PROFILE

In keeping with the opening of The Whitty Theatre, I have chosen to profile two past pupils who have gone on to study and work in theatre.

EMILY JORDAN née Whelon -1989

One of Emily's very strong memories of Luckley, and an event that she admits had an enormous impact on her career, was when her class were taken for a whole day of Shakespeare; Henry IV followed by Henry V, at the Old Vic, London. When, several years later she found herself performing in an entire day of Shakespeare plays herself, this time Henry VI and Richard III, she had to give a nod of thanks to Mrs Wright, her English teacher at Luckley for helping to bring Shakespeare to life for her.

After Luckley, Emily studied at Goldsmiths, London before moving to America in 1996 where she fell into acting and over the next 20 years performed in a variety of theatre productions. She has performed, directed and taught with the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival since 2004 playing a number of leading Shakespeare roles including Lady Macbeth, Rosalind and Kate from Taming of the Shrew and her favourite experience of all playing the title role in an all female production of Richard III.

Somewhere along the road she started to get more and more opportunites to teach acting, which led to directing Los Altos Youth Theatre, California and leading drama classes at a hospital for severely ill children. This has now led Emily back to England to study for a Masters Degree in Applied Theatre back at Goldsmiths.

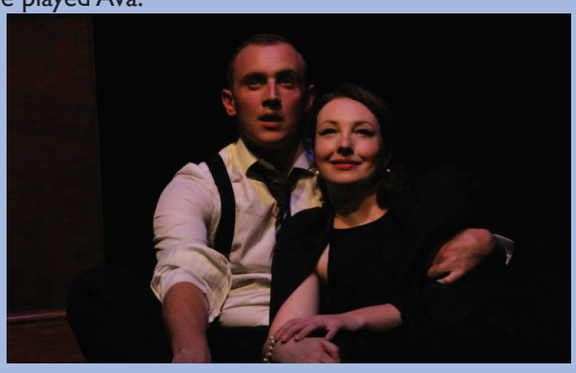
Emily found this photograph of her year group in 'The Caucasian Chalk Circle' where she played the part of Grusha opposite Sarah Beeney as Natella.

She said "I'm terribly envious of the pupils now getting a custom built theatre! But I'm even more envious of the amazing performing arts activities I see going on at Luckley these days, I would love to be there now."

EMILY-JANE ASHFORD - 2011

Since leaving Luckley, Emily-Jane has achieved a BA Hons Degree in Acting at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama and signed with McLean Williams Ltd as a professional actress, singer and dancer.

After graduating, her first role was Princess Maria in 'Call me Madam' in a small tour in Luxembourg, one of only two British actors in the show which was challenging but rewarding, and received very good reviews.
This year, she has been focusing on work as Artistic Consultant with Now You Know Theatre Company, performing in both of their fringe shows. In 'One for my Baby', a play with music about the short and passionate relationship between Frank Sinatra and Ava Gardner, she played Ava.



Their second production, the very poingnant '1 in3' saw Emily playing Nurse Sam, a pivotal role in the treatment and support of a middle-aged man and a young girl going through chemotherapy together. The play received 5* reviews with the company now in talks to take it further.

In January Emily will be flying to Miami to join the Royal Caribbean team of Mama Mia aboard the Allure of the Seas. She said " I will have the opportunity to visit places like Mexico, the Bahamas and surrounding islands while performing in the ensembe. I will also be an understudy for all three Dynamos, so there is lots to learn. I cannot wait to get started!"

KATIE BRIGGS - CLASS OF 2011

In September 2015, Katie Briggs returned to Luckley as a Graduate Assistant. She had graduated from UCA, Farnham, with a degree in Illustration and was considering teaching so this was an ideal position to see school life from the other side! Here is what she had to say about being back at Luckley.

"It was quite a surreal experience being a member of staff as opposed to being a student. Getting used to calling my old teachers by their first names, especially Richard Everatt and Gordon Cromb (somehow it felt stranger with the male teachers), and becoming known as Miss Briggs by the pupils took a little time. I soon became quite comfortable sharing a laugh and cup of tea with my old teachers in the staff room, somewhere I had only visited once before as a privilege on my last day at school. I also smiled to myself every time I walked up the main staircase – somewhere strictly out of bounds to students.

I loved working in the boarding house, sharing stories of my time at Luckley with the boarders and helping make their boarding experience a happy one.

We have had some wonderful trips together to Bath, London, Windsor, Thorpe Park and The Chocolate Show in London - though everyone was very hyper that evening and took a lot of settling down when we returned to school.

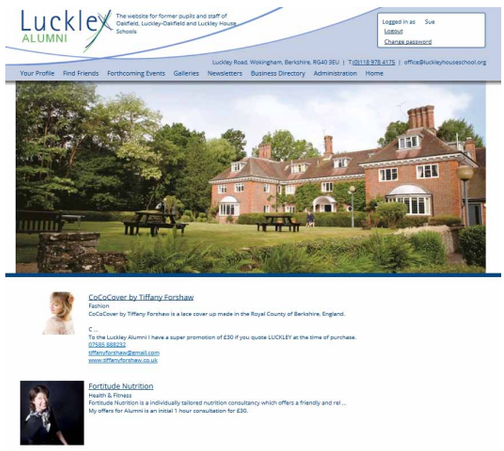
Within school I worked in the school office, helped out in the Art Department and ran an after school Bookmaking Club which was very popular with the pupils. In July I accompanied Mr Cromb on a Year 10 Geography Field Trip to Wales which was a lovely way to round off my year back at Luckley.

I felt extemely sad to leave Luckley for a second time but I am sure I will be back to visit in the future. Once a Luckley girl – always a Luckley girl!"

ALUMNI WEBSITE

The Alumni website http://luckleyhouse.web-intouch.com is being viewed by many ladies, using it to view and update their profile stored on the database. This is enormously helpful to keep all the information stored up to date. Hopefully everyone has received their login for the website, but if not please contact the office.

There is now a new page on the website - The Business Directory. This is an opportunity for any alumni who has a business to advertise and promote it, free of charge, for other alumni to view. The page will also hopefully give alumni with similar businesses a chance to network.



The page has been set up with just two businesses initially, for you to see how it will be displayed, so please take a look. Hopefully, knowing the wide range of businesses and services our alumni are involved in, we can build a large business directory to benefit everyone.

IKONWORKS

Congratulations to Natasha Newland (née Barton), class of 1992, owner and principal photographer at Ikonworks Photography ,who was nominated as a regional finalist for Wedding Photographer of the Year in the Wedding Industry Awards 2016.

Tasha said "I cannot begin to tell you how delighted I am with this achievement. Last year approximately 260,000 weddings took place in the UK, and there are in excess of 50,000 photographers in our country. To be voted by my clients into this high achieving section of my industry, within my area is a true honour, and I am thrilled and hugely excited."

Do take a look at Tasha's website www.ikonworks.co.uk to see some of her amazing images that have graced the pages of some of the leading wedding publications.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

In November, we celebrated the founding of Luckley School with our now traditional visit to Miss Drake's grave to lay flowers and birthday cupcakes for all the pupils and staff. An article written by Vera Inman in the 1967 School Magazine spoke of very different celebrations.

"Luckley was founded on All Saints' Day 1918 and on whichever day it fell there was always a lovely party with the appropriate number of candles. A wonderful tea was spread out on trestle tables lining three sides of the Gym. The girls filed in in pairs, bowed to Miss Drake who sat at the high table before taking their seats at the tables laden with food. It was said on one occasion that one child ate 19 cakes!!"

Unfortunately there do not seem to be any photographs of these birthday celebrations, but I am sure many of you remember them well.

GRADUATION

Unfortunately I received this graduation photograph too late to be included in last year's newsletter, but as it includes not only two past pupils but also Moira Matthews, past History teacher and Head of Sixth Form., I thought you would like to see it.

All three graduated on the same day from Royal Holloway, Amelia Marshall-Stockmall received a MA in Classics, Moira a MRes in History and Camilla Potter a MSc in Geography.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Can you date or put names to anyone in the photos? I would love to hear any stories or memories you have that are related to them.

The Sixth Form, but from what year? It can probably be aged by the length of the skirt hems!

Alice in Wonderland performed on the back lawn. Looking back through the old photos it seems the sun always shone for the performances, unless you remember otherwise.

This looks like a trip to a swimming pool in Richmond-upon-Thames.

In Oak Lounge with Mr Blake, but why?