

Alumni et Amicitia Association



for former pupils and staff of Leehurst, Swan, La Retraite,
La Retraite Swan, and Leehurst Swan Schools

Newsletter 1 2009

Message from the Headmaster

Welcome to the first newsletter produced by the Leehurst Swan Alumni et Amicitia Association! The organisation exists to keep past pupils and staff in contact with each other and the school. So whether you were a member of Leehurst School, La Retraite, The Swan School or La Retraite Swan, this is the association for you.

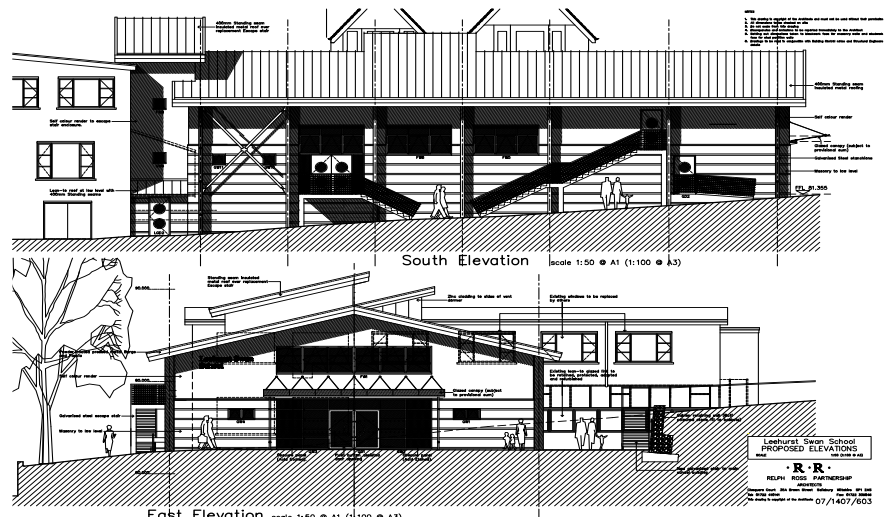
Dr Jane Howells has kindly agreed to take on the role of General Secretary to build links with former pupils and oversee the development of the Association.

The tread of time runs through this school in all its phases, names and stages. Like most institutions today it has evolved and changed as no school can remain the same and still meet the challenge of providing the best for each generation.

I have enjoyed meeting many former members of the school in recent years. All have happy memories of their time here and of the various teachers who taught them.

They treasure golden memories of experiences and eccentricities, of the school rules, the uniforms, the meals, the teachers and above all the shared relationships; all blend together to provide a unifying ethos. Leehurst Swan today is different from the past as education, pupils and teachers have moved on. The buildings have changed in line with new priorities and are changing again. But our shared heritage remains, uniting past and present generations and making us what we are. So please keep in contact with Your School as we value all you have to offer.

Roger Leake, Headmaster



Architects' drawing of the south and east elevations of the new hall, with existing buildings in the background.

New School Hall

A major construction project is about to start, to provide Leehurst Swan with a splendid new hall. This has been on the School Development Plan for the last five years, and a significant amount of time has been spent in the planning stage to ensure maximum benefit to the entire school and best value for money. Due to become operational in September 2010, the building will contain a generous hall area, two first floor classrooms, and an entrance foyer with toilet facilities and a small kitchen. In the slightly longer term it will be fully equipped with state-of-the-art staging and lighting for performing arts events. Listing the uses intended for the new space indicates how important it will become in the life of the school: assemblies; concerts, drama and other performances; dining area for eating packed lunches; pupil events such as visiting speakers; parent occasions such as prize giving, exhibitions, and PTA events. There will probably be many more as the potential of the building is exploited fully.

The programme also includes significant external improvements, including the new outdoor learning area that is already being used by Key Stage 2 children.

School must continue alongside the builders. Careful planning is underway to minimise the disruption, and to make the most of educational opportunities offered by the development.

Progress reports will be posted on the school website weekly, provided by the pupils, each year in turn contributing a report, picture or diagram, alongside a photo. We look forward to welcoming former pupils and staff to the opening ceremony!

News of former pupils

Jenny Hiley: 'I was a pupil at La Retraite School between the years 1993 and 1998. I completed a nursing degree at Birmingham University in 2005. My passion for improving the health and well-being of others led me to undertake a Masters in Public Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine this year. I am interested in pursuing a career in health policy and I am currently working as a Health Policy Intern at the independent social policy think-tank CIVITAS'.

Elise Wylie: 'I work as a Private Banker in the wealth management division of a leading global financial institution. My clients, who come from all over the world, tend to be sophisticated and high profile individuals with complex requirements. It is my job to meet their needs and where necessary work with my colleagues globally to find the solutions they seek. It is imperative that we work well under pressure and always deliver ahead of time. My role has allowed me to move abroad and work in an international environment – the 23 people in my team come from 11 different countries. I was at LR between 1993 and 2000, year 7 to year 13, and then studied at Cardiff and Birmingham Universities'.

Rachel Worth: (La Retraite 1976 to 1981) is Professor of Fashion History at the Arts University College, Bournemouth. She is the author of *Fashion for the People: A History of Clothing at Marks & Spencer*, and this will be subject of her lecture when she appears as the keynote speaker for the West of England and South Wales Women's History Network conference in Salisbury next July.

James Hitchings: 'After leaving Swan School in 1994 I went to Gillingham Comprehensive in Dorset, to Salisbury College for a National Diploma in Computer Studies, and then onto Bournemouth University, where I studied BSc Software Engineering and Management. I'm now working for a small consultancy firm in Guildford. We focus on credit card security and contactless payments on cards and mobile phones'.

James is planning a reunion, please get in touch with him via Facebook or by email
JHitchingsEmail@aol.com

Our schools - past, present and future

The history of the schools starts from two separate sources. The Convent of Christian Education opened in a house named 'Leehurst', Campbell Rd, in May 1914, after moving from Wain-a-long Road where the school had begun in 1911. The Sisters of La Retraite took over in 1953, added to the buildings, and three years later purchased 'Bowerhill', next door, for the preparatory department. In 1933 Miss E N Swanton opened her school in New Street, educating boys aged from 4 to 8. Five years later she moved to more spacious premises in Crane Street. After the Second World War it formally became The Swan School, and boys stayed on to 11. Three more moves followed, in 1954 to St Martin's Hall in Milford Street, and in 1963 to Elm Grove Road, and then in 1996 'La Retraite School & The Swan School for Boys' was formed in Campbell Road. Two more changes of name created Leehurst Swan, the successful co-educational school for girls and boys aged 2 1/2 to 16 we have today.

This newsletter is being sent to recent leavers, former members of the La Retraite Association, and people who have contacted us. Please tell everyone else you know who was a pupil, or member of staff, at any of the schools, and ask them to get in touch (details below). If you have received a paper version and would be happy to have it as an email attachment (saving in postage for us) please let us have your email address.

I would be delighted to hear from former pupils and staff who would be prepared to share their memories or memorabilia. In particular we need more information about the early years of both the girls' and boys' schools. Are there photographs somewhere from the Convent in the 1920s or the Swan in the 1930s?

Jane Howells

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Carol service

The Leehurst Swan School Carol Service this year will take place in Salisbury Cathedral on Thursday 17 December 2010 at 9.30 am.
We would be very pleased to see you there.

Success for Leehurst Swan

In 2009 Leehurst Swan is placed 156 in the top 250 Preparatory Schools (up from 177 in 2008), and 22 in the top 50 Independent Secondary Schools with no or small sixth forms, (up from 46 in 2008).

Timesonline Parent Power League Tables

Were you at Swan School in the early 1990s?

contact James Hitchings (see left)

The Swan
School
1994

*can you
remember
these
people?*

*would you
recognise
them now?*

