

Alumni et Amicitia Association



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

Newsletter 16
Mar 2017

Welcome to the spring newsletter from AAA for the past pupils of The Swan, La Retraite and Leehurst Swan Schools.

The year continues to fly by and there have been many developments. The physical developments include a refit of the Senior school classrooms to upgrade them to the same standard as the classrooms enjoyed by the Prep school in the Centenary building. The estates staff have almost completed Room 34, which will finish the refurbishment of the Mathematics department. All the upstairs classrooms for Spanish, French and German, along with History and Geography, have been completed. The light and airy finish, complete with interactive whiteboards, has transformed appearances while the new doors and carpets provide the finishing touches.

Although Leehurst Swan is about far more than academic results, we are delighted to have been listed by The Times as 22nd in their league table of schools with no sixth form, and 44th in The Daily Telegraph's league table of all state and independent schools, ranked on the GCSE results.

Sporting success too continues, with a record number of our swimmers being selected for the National ISA Finals. A large number of runners completed the South West Cross Country, with one pupil winning in the National Finals. We have also enjoyed success in team sports, with the girls' U10 netball team being victorious against local rivals, the Godolphin and Cathedral School.



The school musical is due to take place this week, entitled 'An Evening with Roald Dahl'. It promises to be an entertaining evening of a series of plays based on the work of the famous author, with special focus on Matilda. Please see comments in this newsletter about the productions from the past by Helen Tambling; the tradition continues.

Meanwhile, the art department has been very busy with a major exhibition in the Young Gallery in Salisbury, and a display at the entrance to the Five River Leisure Centre. Last week, two of our pupils won the South West Art Competition, and will now go through to the National Final in November. One pupil was runner up in the same competition.

Last week, the school was also visited by five inspectors for three days. They inspected many aspects of the school, including the Early Years, the Prep and the Senior School. I very much look forward to sharing the report with you in the next newsletter.

I hope you will revisit the school over the summer for one of the AAA events. Please see details in this newsletter.

With very best wishes,

Roger Leake

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Dates for your Diary

Swan Reunion 12pm June 17th 2017

This is a celebration of the anniversary of the joining of Swan School with La Retraite. Do come along if you were a pupil of the Swan at any time and please bring any friends who are ex pupils. Further details and the invitation are attached.

Alumni Lunch July 1st 2017

This is our third annual lunch and all alumni and friends are very welcome. There is also a chance to see the art produced by our GCSE pupils. We will be having a sit down cold buffet this year. Details and the invitation are attached.

Cathedral Service 2017

This will be held on Thursday 14th December at 9.30am. All Alumni are very welcome to attend and we would love to see you there.

News and Alumni

Mike returns to take Assembly

On Friday 3rd March Mike Hollingbery, who left in 2009, came to give a talk in assembly to our seniors. He is now in charge of a marketing team at Sky TV, so is enjoying a fascinating career. After Leehurst he studied at Bishops' and UWE and worked for Warner Brothers before being head-hunted for Sky. His advice to our pupils was threefold: work hard; work with others and embrace failure. Current pupils always appreciate hearing about the careers of Alumni and we very much enjoyed his visit.



Salisbury Schools Art exhibition in the Young Gallery within Salisbury Library

In February our Head of Art, David Liversage, organised the fifth annual Salisbury schools Art exhibition in the Library entitled 'A Library of Ideas'. The theme this year was books and reading to coincide with World Book Day. Ten local schools: primary and secondary, independent and state, took part. Two year 6 pupils (Francesca Holtby and Hari Chowdhury) were presented with prizes by John Glen MP in a competition to mark the end of the exhibition.



The book 'tree' in the Library

Helen Tambling

Helen Ainsley, as she was then, joined La Retraite, as a pupil, in 1955, and left in 1962. Although she has fond memories of the school, she was not the best behaved of pupils. She started the notorious 'Ethel Martin fan club' and remembers the persecuted teacher sitting her, and her friends, on baby chairs for being especially naughty. In one lesson, with Sister Mary Winifred, the latter removed her apron. Neither Helen nor her friend Ann know the significance of that gesture, but it was clearly a sign of deep displeasure.

It may be surprising, therefore, that Mrs Helen Tambling was welcomed back as a teacher at Bowerhill Prep school in 1966. The new teacher was considered 'very dashing' by the pupils as she wore miniskirts and drove an MGA (she still has the MGA in her garage). Helen loved teaching and appreciated the 'magic atmosphere' which existed in the school. She speaks fondly of the head teachers who helped her: Sister Honoria, Sister Maria and the first lay headmistress, Mrs Scott.



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Mrs Tambling with one of her first classes. Are you there?

The first trip to Mill on the Brue, still an annual event for Year 6, was organised by Mrs Tambling in 1993. The visits were always accompanied by Mrs Ann Clarke and, on several occasions, by Mrs Bayliss, Mrs Dragonetti, and Mr Thomas, who entertained them all. Helen always looked forward to the week away, seeing the children mature and develop new skills.

Plays were an important part of Helen's life at school; she particularly remembers the extravagant production of Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat, staged in 1970. One play in the garden was enlivened by the presence of a horse, an unusual addition to a school cast. The many concerts and musicals would not have happened without the expertise of Mrs Christine Powell and Tricia Dragonetti.

Every Thursday swimming lessons took place with Mrs Atwell; Helen could not swim but learned how to teach the skill by listening to her experienced fellow instructor. Another expert brought in was Mrs Farrar, an ex-pupil who taught needlework; her daughters, Laura and Emily, later attended La Retraite Swan. A dramatic event was the introduction of a large computer, brought in by Mr Clarke. Helen and Ann had to learn word processing and how to write a string of commands to do simple tasks. However, they grew so proficient that they introduced the first computerised reports in the school.

When Helen was asked what her worst memories were, she could not think of many. At school there were two girls who died from drowning, tragically exactly a year apart in 1956 and 1957. As a teacher, she felt that leaving Bowerhill in 1988 was a huge wrench. The biggest wrench of all, however, was her retirement in 2003. Since then, Helen has been very active as an alumna of the school and we will all look forward to seeing her at the lunch in July.

The front cover of the Tambling Times, produced by Year 5 and Year 6 pupils for Mrs Tambling



Membership

If you are receiving this Newsletter direct it is because you are registered as a member of the AAA. Membership is currently free and will be in the future for all existing members. However, from 1st January 2018 a one off membership fee of £25 will be charged for all former pupils joining the association. Therefore please encourage as many former pupils as possible to join this year!

New arrangements for Newsletters and Email Addresses Please!

In future the November edition of the newsletter will be just an email update. A full newsletter will be sent out in March by email and posted to those without an email address. If you receive a printed copy of this and you have an email address, please could you send it to me at

t.cotton@leehurstswan.org.uk

Thank you very much. Trudi Cotton



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