

# Alumni et Amicitia Association



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

Newsletter 9  
December 2013

## From the Headmaster

The Prep building is taking shape and the roof has been completed in time to keep the worst of the winter weather out. I am very much looking forward to the opening, due sometime in June 2014, when we will be able to accommodate all prep classes in one building, with twelve new classrooms.



(above) demolition July 2013

(left) new building December 2013

This is a very significant year for Leehurst Swan, as the first school here was officially opened in May 1914. During the course of 2014 from May onwards, we will be celebrating the centenary of education on this site, and the bringing together of the Swan School and La Retraite.

I am indebted to Dr Jane Howells who has written the history of the school - the first 100 years - detailing the different stages of Leehurst and La Retraite, and giving an account of how the Swan School developed. There are details overleaf on how to obtain a copy. You may wish to buy a copy for yourself, or perhaps someone you know who was associated with the school in the past 100 years.

I hope that as many members as possible will wish to join in the centenary celebrations that are listed in this newsletter. Perhaps it is a time to rekindle old friendships, relive past memories, or simply come and visit to see what your school is like today. You are most

welcome to join us, many events are free, we want you to be part of the extended community that is made up of present and past members of the school.

Finally, to celebrate our 100 years, Friends of Leehurst Swan are hosting a Centenary Ball here in school on Saturday 5th July. Tickets will be on sale in the New Year, for what promises to be a memorable black tie evening. A live band, three course sumptuous menu and entertainment are all part of this event. All members of the AAA are welcome to attend and tables of up to eight persons will be available for groups. Why not put the date in your diary now and invite friends to come with you? Tickets will be £35 per person, although an early discount will be available of £30 per person for groups of 8.

To book to attend any event please contact my Personal Assistant, Mrs Fiona Nokes [patohm@leehurstswan.org.uk](mailto:patohm@leehurstswan.org.uk)

*Roger Leake*

## Date for your diary

The School Carol Service will take place in Salisbury Cathedral on Thursday 19 December 2013 at 9.30 am

**Everyone is welcome**

## CENTENARY CELEBRATION EVENTS 2014

14 May: Unveiling of the blue plaque

**16 May: AAA Tea years 1914-1960**

22 May: Centenary Concert by pupils Yr 5 - 10

23 May: Prep Edwardian Day and Sports

**6 June: AAA Tea years 1961-1980**

14 June: School Centenary Fete

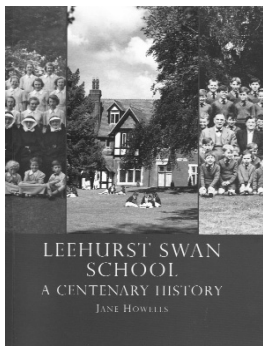
**20 June: AAA Tea years 1981-2000**

**27 June: AAA Tea years 2000-2013**

5 July: FOLS Centenary Ball (*see overleaf*)

8 July: School Centenary Pageant Day

Former pupils, staff and friends of the schools are very welcome at all of these events. In particular we hope you will come to the tea party for 'your' years at school. We do, of course, realise that individuals will overlap these neat time slots, so do arrange amongst yourselves to bring a party, or contact us to see who is coming from your yeargroup. Please spread the news, especially if you know people who might not be on our mailing list. Get in touch if you have any queries and don't forget to RSVP so we are sure to have enough cake! The school's phone number is at the bottom of this page, or email  
Fiona Nokes [patohm@leehurstswan.org.uk](mailto:patohm@leehurstswan.org.uk)



### The book!

traces the fascinating history of the school using memories from staff and students as well as historical records. It is generously illustrated with archive images and modern photographs. There are chapters on Leehurst Convent 1914-1953, the Swan School from the 1930s to the 1990s, La Retraite 1953-1996, and the co-educational school to the

present day. The Headmaster Roger Leake has contributed the introduction and a conclusion that looks forward to the next stage in the history of Leehurst Swan School.

TO ORDER SEND YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS PLUS A CHEQUE FOR £7.99 + £1 P&P PER COPY, TO SCHOOL - ADDRESS OPPOSITE. COLLECT FROM SCHOOL DURING OFFICE HOURS IN TERM TIME TO AVOID POSTAGE CHARGE.

### Email addresses

**Thanks to everyone who responded to this plea in the last Newsletter, more needed please!**

*Did you receive this Newsletter on paper through the post? Have you got an email address we could use for sending future issues? It saves a huge amount of time and money. We will of course continue to use envelopes and stamps for anyone who prefers it that way. we DO want to keep in touch!*

## Christine Willetts 1948 - 2013

Mrs Christine Willetts was PA to the Head from 1989 to 2004. She combined great efficiency with a terrific sense of humour, and an infallible memory for pretty well everything; and she was a valued friend to people throughout the school. Not one to let the grass grow under her feet, while she was here Chris took her driving test, gained GCSE Spanish and then did an Open University degree. She was much missed when she left to work at the Deanery, and then moved to Bath to be near her grandchildren.

We were very sorry to hear of her death in November, after a short illness, and we send our sympathy to all her family.

### Appeal to Employers

On 22 September 2014 we are holding our first 'Employers into Schools' event in the evening. The idea is that our Year 10 and 11 students and their parents will be able to meet local employers with a view to finding out about different types of position which our pupils may consider when they finish full-time education. We also hope that some pupils might be able to find work experience places, and that employers will be able to advertise apprenticeships. This is also a chance to network with other firms in the area. It would be lovely if employers who are also alumni could take part. If you are interested (no commitment yet!) please contact me at school (details below). Thank you very much. Trudi Cotton, Head of Careers Dept. [t.cotton@leehurstswan.org.uk](mailto:t.cotton@leehurstswan.org.uk)

### Thanks

Thanks as usual to everyone who has been in touch, especially all those who contributed to the book. Any mistakes and omissions in the list of acknowledgements are mine, and I ask you to accept my apologies.

In the last newsletter we published a request from Jennie Milne, and she was delighted with the response from readers, so thanks to all those people who helped.

And in answer to the query 'Is the copper beech tree still there?' here it is!



### Work experience prize 2013

This year's prize for work experience was awarded to Isabel Humphreys. She spent two weeks at Grovely Riding School in Wilton where she was involved with almost all aspects of the stables, and also helped with the classes. Isabel enjoyed the placement enormously and received an excellent report from her employers. The experience confirmed her decision about a future career, and she is now studying equine management at Sparsholt College.

Jane Howells

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