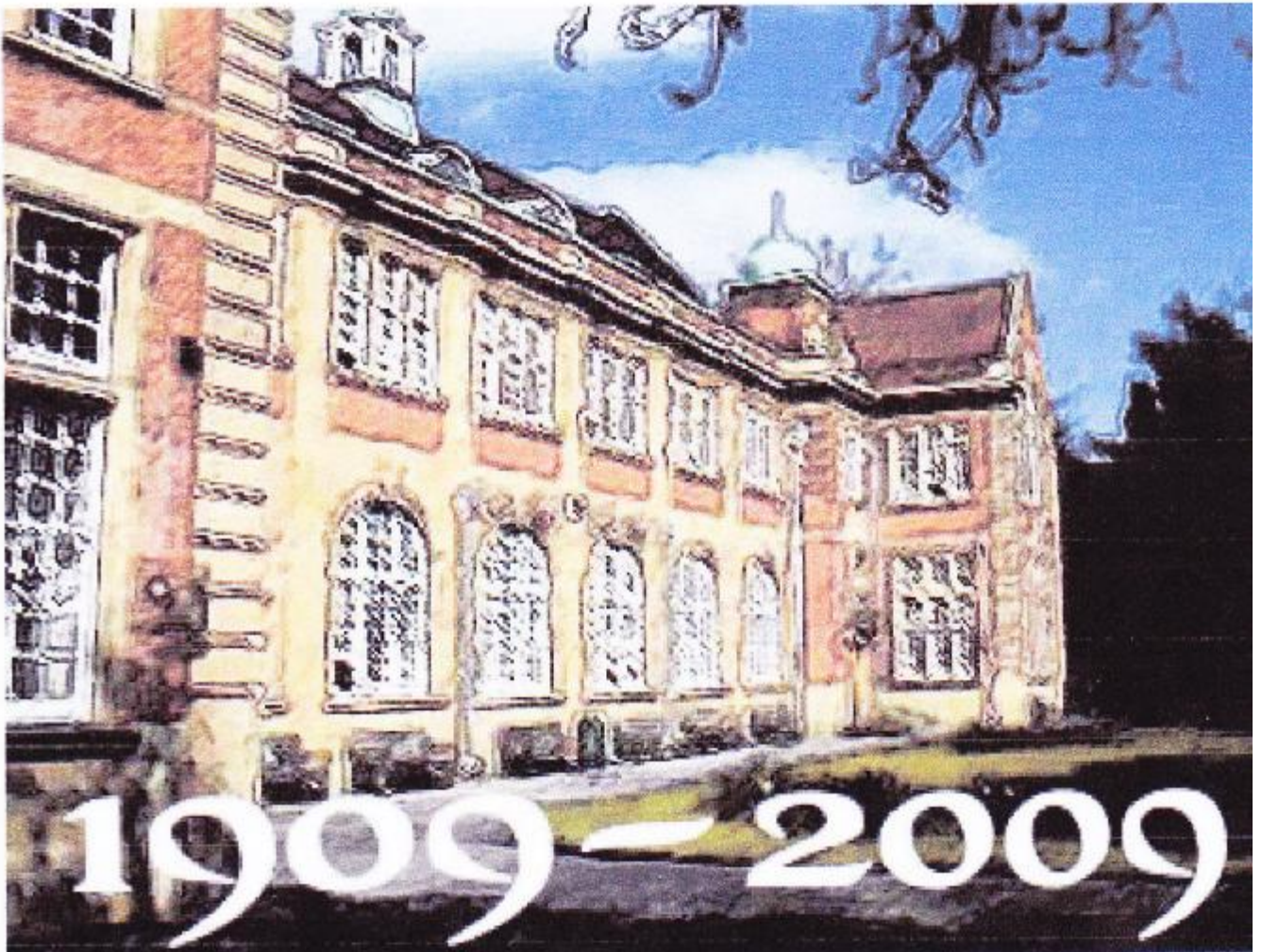


# ENFIELD COUNTY SCHOOL CENTENARY 1909-2009



## A CELEBRATION

Reminiscences of  
Former staff and pupils  
With assistance from the current Head

<p>1909- SETTING THE SCENE 1909</p> <p>The number <i>1909</i> is a hyperperfect number, because the sum of its proper divisors (23 and 83) is a divisor of <math>n-1</math> (<math>18 \times 106 = 1908</math>). The next year to be a hyperperfect number will be 2041, but then not again until <i>3901</i></p> <p>A manual worker earned 23 shillings (£1.15) a week, with a dozen eggs costing a shilling (5p), a pound of butter 1s2d (6p) and a pint of beer two shillings (10p). A pair of ladies' shoes cost 7s11d (40p) a man's suit 6s11d (35p) and a girl's school frock 2s8d (13.5p).</p> <p>January - The Old Age Pensions Act 1908 comes into force in Britain</p> <p>January 16 - Ernest Shackleton's expedition finds the magnetic South Pole.</p> <p>March 18 - Einar Dessau uses a short-wave radio transmitter becoming the first radio broadcaster</p> <p>Australia and South Africa meet at Lord's and form the Imperial Cricket Conference</p> <p>July 25 - Louis Bleriot is the first man to fly across the English Channel in a heavier-than-air craft</p> <p>September 9 Enfield County School opens</p> <p>October - The Trade Boards Act, a form of Minimum wage legislation, is passed in the UK</p> <p>The first rugby football match played in Twickenham</p> <p>The University of Bristol is founded and receives its Royal Charter</p>
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<p>Contributors</p> <p>Mary Stevenson (Bruno 1946-52) P4.</p> <p>Bessie S French (from Golden Jubilee Magazine) P5</p> <p>Gallery of Early Headmistresses P6-7</p> <p>Nancy Bower (Thompson) 1932-9 P8</p> <p>Betty Archer (Young) 1937-44 P8</p> <p>Jane Hillsdon (Batt) 1945-51 P9</p> <p>M C Sharp from ECS Magazine P9-10</p> <p>Nanette Whitman (Lucas) 1943-50 P11-12</p> <p>Hazel Robson 1943-50 P12</p> <p>Ann Mephram (King) 1945-52 P10-11</p> <p>Jean Potter (Nightingale) 1946-49 P13</p> <p>Gillian Phillips (Napier) P14</p> <p>Dilys Pollard (Thomas) 1946-50 P14-15</p> <p>Jeanne Pimentel (Duval 1946-51) P15-17 &amp; 28-29</p> <p>Inga Feaver (Dunwoody) 1947-55 P17-18</p> <p>Audrey Walker ECS Magazine Autumn 1953: CORONATION DAY P18</p> <p>Marjorie Taylor/Jan Farebrother School Office Managers 1946-2001 P19</p> <p>Janet Naylor (Riley) 1949-54 P19-20</p> <p>Nola Owers (Usher) 1957-63 P20</p> <p>Joyce Anelay (Clarke) 1958 – 1965 P21</p> <p>Heather Leigh (Spence) 1957-72 P21-22</p> <p>Jean Cleare. (Buchanan) P24</p> <p>Jennifer Caddy 1961-68 P24</p> <p>Gina K Lane (Moss) 1963-69 P24-25</p> <p>Miss I K Hogg 1964 Magazine &amp; 1967 Magazine P25</p> <p>Annette Guttridge (Storrs-Elsey) 1967-78:1979-83 P25-26</p> <p>Kim Frazer (Staples) 1971- 1978 P26</p> <p>Maria Walker (Constantinou) 1978-84 P27</p> <p>Joan Hart– A Tribute P29</p> <p>Irene Byard –Headmistress 1986-2005 P30-31</p> <p>Pamela Rutherford 1979-2009 Current Headteacher P31-32</p> <p>Harriett Nailon (Lott) 1956-63 Chairman ECSOGA P32-35</p> <p>Diki Gleeson (Barbara Turpin) 1943-50 P36-40</p>
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# ENFIELD COUNTY SCHOOL CENTENARY 1909-2009

## A CELEBRATION

Reminiscences of  
Former staff and pupils  
With assistance from the current Head

Published by ECSOGA  
Enfield County School Old Girls' Association  
2009

## Editor's Introduction

MARY STEVENSON (Bruno) 1946-52

Enfield County School for Girls was officially opened on September 25 1909. The original building (now called the Broome Building) still stands and is in daily use and, last time I looked, there was some of the original equipment in one of the laboratories!

Enfield County School opened as a Grammar School, it later combined with Chace Girls' School and became a Comprehensive School and, later still, changed its name back to Enfield County School. The exam systems, as well as the syllabus, changed more than once and there were two World Wars. These upheavals invariably meant more work for staff and girls and were enormously disruptive. However, the School always maintained a very high quality of staff overall and weathered the changes in society and education and the deficiency of the school buildings for much of its existence.

Although there is an enormous gulf between the School, when it opened and as it is today, a number of things remain the same. I became a *pupil* at Enfield County School for Girls in September 1946. It was just after the end of the Second World War and although many things were still rationed, including clothes, the girls in our year seemed to have a real sense of freedom, after the restrictions of wartime. We enjoyed ourselves and tackled most things with enthusiasm. The recent *students* of ECS, who over the years (mainly the Head and Deputy Head Girls), have joined us at ECSOGA Reunions, would have had no difficulty in fitting in with the girls in my time at ECS; coping with the limited equipment would be a different matter. Pen and ink were used for formal work (biros were not available at first and were forbidden when they appeared on the market), text books were old and battered and in some cases had to be shared. There were no computers, television was almost non-existent (not a bad thing, some may think) and books and paper were in short supply. However, the interest in music and drama, raising money for and helping charities, school trips abroad are all activities which have lasted throughout the life of the School.

It is sad that the end of ECSOGA, in its current form, should coincide with the Centenary of the school. During the second world war, all activities ceased for a period of 5 years and then ECSOGA started up again in 1945, though some of the previous activities were never re-established. We are sure that many old girls will wish to keep in touch with each other and with the School, in which case a new Association, with an appropriate name, will come into existence, probably in an entirely different form. In these days of ever changing technology and means of communication, we cannot foresee exactly how this will work, but we are sure that future *Old Girls*, *Former Alumni*, *Ex Pupils*, or *Whoever* will be capable of organising an appropriate network to communicate with each other.

I would like to thank **everyone** who has made the effort to recall their time at ECS and to give us the benefit of their memories. I felt that I should have written a personal letter of thanks to each of you, but the cost of stationery, ink and postage would have added a not insubstantial amount to the overall cost of producing this publication.

I am sure that you have **all** given very valuable time to producing your contribution, but I would particularly like to thank Ms Pamela Rutherford for sparing time from her numerous duties and responsibilities as current Headteacher of ECS to write something for us.

I would also like to mention particularly: Miss Irene Byard, who, though retired, is a Justice of the Peace and also a Governor of Capel Manor; The Baroness Anelay DBE. PC, who, as Opposition Chief Whip in the House of Lords, has great demands on her time; the office staff at ECS, who have always been cheerful and ready to help, whenever asked and last, but by no means least Mrs Joan Hart, who has provided an enormous amount of support, advice and information from her archives and fund of memories from her time at ECS.

ON BEHALF OF ECSOGA  
THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR  
HELP AND PARTICIPATION



## **MORE THEN ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO**

(an extract from the E.C.S.O.G. Golden Jubilee Magazine)

Bessie S. French

It was, I think, in 1906 that the old British Hall in Chase side first opened its doors to about twenty of us, four of whom were male students, who were to spend part of the next few years there preparing to pass our Entrance Examination for Training Colleges. This really proved to be the foundation of the County -School.

Miss Broome arrived to take up the post of head mistress, with two assistants, Miss Buckeridge and Miss Florence. The latter intrigued us most. with her pronounced Scottish accent and the fact that it took her some time to become accustomed to our Sassanach names, simple as they seemed to us. For several weeks; and; I must admit, very much to our annoyance. Jessie Foster and Bessie French were called Jess French and Bess Foster. However, all this straightened itself out and Miss Florence became quite popular.

Miss Broome gave us Religious Instruction and she presided at our "School Dinners" and woe betide anyone whose table manners were not impeccable. Only those whose homes were distance away stayed for lunch, and meals were sent in from a neighbouring- restaurant. Before long, however, several of us, tiring of restrictions, went off to Painter's, a baker's shop a few doors away, for tea and buns. Incidentally it was a good way of augmenting our pocket money, as of course our parents had given us cash for proper dinners. Needless to say discovery soon followed, but I have forgotten the conselt way of augmenting our pocket money, as of course our parents had given us cash for proper dinners. Needless to say discovery soon followed, but I have forgotten the conse

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The greatest difficulty in. those days was the journey to and from school. I am now thinking particularly of those of us who came from Enfield Lock and Freezywater, a distance of three or four miles with no trams, buses or public transport of any kind, either in Hertford Road or Southbury Road, which in 1906 was a country lane with hedges on both sides and only one short terrace of houses just east of where the Great Cambridge Road now crosses. In fine weather we cycled, a pleasant ride via Turkey Street and Forty Hill. It amazes me now how frequently our tyres punctured, always near Maiden's Bridge, or how often a chain slipped off. We had to stop and help one another, and on many mornings a group of us arrived late. In really bad weather we travelled by train and this was something of an adventure. We walked to Forty Hill Station in Turkey Street and took a train to Edmonton, where we changed and caught another train to Enfield Town Station. Just how long this took I really have forgotten but we certainly left home quite early in the morning.

By 1909 we were all away in College, and the new County School was opened in September. We rather felt that we had no part in it, but I surmise now that our loyalties had been transferred to our colleges. Miss Broome, the staff and the female students, who were then preparing for the Preliminary Examination, were transferred from the Old British School and formed the nucleus of the Enfield Girls' County School.

## **ENFIELD COUNTY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

**Was officially opened by:**

**Mr. County Alderman Colonel Bowles, JP,  
Chairman of the Middlesex Education  
Committee and of the Board of Governors  
of the School on**

**SEPTEMBER 25, 1909**

## THE EARLY HEADMISTRESSES — A GALLERY



**Miss Emily Rose Broome** became the first Head Mistress of Enfield County School. Her education and training were fully Victorian. She had lived in New Zealand from the age of 12 until her return to England in 1901 after which she had short-lived teaching posts in grammar schools and at St Leonard's Ladies College. Eventually Colonel Bowles, JP, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the School, who had been connected in some way with her father, secured Miss Broome's appointment at the two-class Centre, which became ECS in 1909.

Miss Broome was a head of immensely long experience - at the Centre from 1905 and from 1909 at ECS - a total of 32 years, most in ever changing circumstances, which included the difficulties of the Great War. She and the Governors had the ability to attract good teachers and she allowed perfect freedom and choice of subject and method of treatment, while giving practical help and encouragement. She was aware of the intellectual superiority of many and Miss Florence and Miss Forrest ran the school.



**Mary Constance Sharp** (known as Mollie to friends and family) was born in 1899, her father was a Church of England clergyman.

She went up to Somerville College, Oxford in 1918. MC Sharp graduated with a BA Hons II in Modern History in 1922.

In September 1937, at the age of 38, Miss M C Sharp was appointed Headmistress of Enfield County School for Girls. During the 25 years that MC was Head there was World War II, the Cold War, a new Education Act, Government White Paper, and various reports on education. From almost the very beginning of her appointment new building work and refurbishments were banned, books, paper, food clothes and heating were rationed. The School received a direct hit by a bomb.

The school grew from 21 staff and just over 400 girls to over 50 staff (including part timers) and over 820 girls. During that time MC sought to get improved accommodation, more staff and a wider range of subjects to offer the girls.

## THE EARLY HEADMISTRESSES — A GALLERY



**Miss Iris Hogg** studied mathematics and physics at Queen Mary College, London University. She played hockey, tennis and badminton for her college and was in the university's hockey team. She was also a member of the college dramatic society, and was the women's president of the College Union for a year. After leaving university she taught mathematics until 1956 and later joined Parliament Hill School as deputy head Mistress and then Head Mistress. While she was there the school went comprehensive.

Miss Hogg succeeded Miss M C Sharp as Head of Enfield County (Grammar) School in 1962 and stayed until her retirement in 1974 by which time the School had become Enfield Chace School, an all girls' County Comprehensive School, having merged with Chace Girls' School.

On her retirement Miss Hogg said that she had enjoyed the 12 years of administration involved in combining the two schools.

### **Miss Hogg declared:**

*"we offer the girls equal opportunity, so that they may grow intellectually, spiritually and culturally; the only limit we recognise is their own individual capacity."*



**Miss Barbara Pagan** came to Enfield County School – then known as Enfield Chace, in 1974.

She brought with her a vast experience of the education world and showed business and management skills, which probably dated back to her involvement in the family bakery in Yorkshire. In the first few months of her time at ECS everyone recognised that Barbara Pagan knew exactly what she was doing and what she expected from her staff. She always set an example which, inspired her staff and she helped many to develop their skills and further their careers. She also set and maintained standards, which pupils learned to respect.

Barbara Pagan was a fair but tough person, who would listen to all sides of any argument. She also had a good sense of humour and a very special laugh. She liked to move around the school, keeping her eye on things – greeting girls as they came in and seeing them off the premises.

She ensured that in a girls' school a demanding and modern curriculum was introduced. Barbara Pagan wanted all girls to leave school with confidence and the ability to meet the challenges of the world outside.



## Nancy Bower (Thompson) 1932-9

My memories go back to the early 1930's, when great names filled my horizon - Broome, Florence, Forrest, Sharp (later twice over) Baxter- the list could go on.

I have sent in what I remember to the archives, but I have hardly ever felt that I had quite captured the incredible individuality and impact of the teachers. And after a lifetime spent in and around schools, I have never ceased to wonder at the sheer ground-breaking achievement that was theirs.

By the time I joined ECS it was, after some 25 years, a school firmly established in its character and function. It was providing total immersion in the ethos and culture of its time, with absolutely no concessions to gender. It never occurred to us that the boys at "The Grammar" around the corner were in any way better educated than we were — and of course they weren't. The novelty of the situation never struck us, either.

Yet our teachers were in fact some of the first women to have degrees. They were independent, they travelled, organised and carried out voluntary work, and did a professional job of pushing us on, to do whatever it was in us to do, as the equals of men.

Unlike almost all the other women whose lives were around us, they were not chiefly defined by their position in a family, but by what they were and did as individuals. Victorian pioneers has begun the process. By the 1930's we could see it in school every day. They were opening up new possibilities for us, confidently.

That was what we learned from them collectively, but what we learned from each in turn was in each case a separate experience. They were very definite personalities, giving insights into what they had seen, read and cared about, and were glad to pass on to us; we were not uncritical, but loved the diversity and, if sometimes we had to steer around temperaments, that was part of learning too.

It goes without saying that they did well by us. We took that for granted. It was only in later years that we realised how lucky we had been, to be female at our particular time in history, with such teachers to open up the world for us.

What great people they were!

## Betty M Archer (Young) 1937-44

I have been connected with Enfield County School for over 70 years, since I started at the school in 1937 - a time of considerable optimism after the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

Miss M C Sharp had just arrived and we were the first group to do a non verbal reasoning test with no previous experience or practice. The first sign of change was when refugees, sponsored by Miss Rudkin, arrived from Europe. When war was declared in 1939, there was talk of evacuation but ECS was spared this upheaval and actually managed to accommodate 750 pupils from surrounding schools.

We got used to lessons in shelters and corridors and, thanks to the hard work and calm atmosphere of Miss Sharp and her staff, we continued with our work, starting later if there were raids over night.

Miss Sharp's analysis of the news kept us up to date and Miss Forrest's French plays helped us to practise French, when unable to go to France. Miss Woods and Miss Bidwell inspired us with music and poetry—still recalled in times of stress!

We took part in the local Musical Festival, games went on as usual and gym went on in a local church hall after our own gym was destroyed by a fire bomb. Miss F Sharp and Miss Hodgson ran the Guide Company.

We grew vegetables on the school field and in Miss Woods' garden in Silver Street.

We shared lessons with the Grammar School in the sixth form. The boys came to ECS for Biology and we went to the Grammar for Chemistry and Physics and had lunch in the Grammar School hall. A joint social club was formed, which was very popular. Several of my friends went on to Higher Education, but I joined the WRNS and served for 2 years.

I kept in touch with Miss Woods and Miss Bidwell, who introduced us to the theatre — John Gielgud and Laurence Olivier, which made me a fan for life.

I next made contact with the school when I took two of my children to Miss Sharp's 25th anniversary celebration and in 1952 my eldest daughter, Alison, went to the school when Miss Hogg became head and was there when the Comprehensive School was formed. Miss Tomlinson, who had taught me, was still there, which was a pleasant link. Alison eventually went on to Lancaster University to study English and Drama.

My younger daughter, Mary, started at the same time as Miss Pagan and benefitted from her relaxation on ,



streaming and left to get catering training at McDonalds, which serves her in good stead to this day in other catering jobs

When Miss Bidwell died, I attended her funeral and met up with Mary Turnbull, who persuaded me to join the Old Girls' Association and I eventually was on the Committee—my catering experience was very useful! And I became Chair of the OG's, when Maryane Read died suddenly and I was able to assemble an excellent Committee, with Ann Wickert as Treasurer, Helen Dordewic and Harriett Nailon, who became Membership Secretary and attracted many younger members by her 'cohorts' meeting.

I carried on until there was mention of Web Sites and email and then decided to retire gracefully and leave it to Mary Stevenson, Jean Potter and the new Head Ms Rutherford to bring things up to date, ready to start the next hundred years of our much loved school..

### **Jane Hillsdon (Batt) - 1945-51**

My own schooldays seem rather mundane compared with the anecdotes of my mother's days at ECS in the 20's.

Babs (as she was known) and her elder sister Lily were at the school together and their brother Basil was at the Grammar School. His best friend was Frank Eagles, son of the headmaster at the time. In a diary I have records of tennis matches regularly played between the girls of the County School and boys at the Grammar. Although the boys seemed to win my mother and aunt held their own as both were tennis champions in succeeding years.

As well as details of sports days in which Lily's prowess at the slow bicycle race and Babs' success in the egg and spoon were proudly recorded, there were theatrical events, with photos of Lily as Portia from the Merchant of Venice in one school production. However, some serious academic work was done, with Lily, Basil and Frank going on to University. I do recall my mother admitting that as money was rather short and she never managed to get Matric - her maths being not up to standard (though I remember her doing quite well with my quadratic equations (sorry Miss Bowen) she went on to Pitmans College and acquired skills there that served her well until she retired in her sixties.

Lily and Frank were happily married, Basil married his County School girl friend, and several of their 'set' were staunch supporters of the Old Girls and Old Boys associations, as indeed are some of their offspring today.

### **Miss M C Sharp Headmistress 1937-1962**

When I came to the School in 1937 there were 21 members of the Staff and just over 400 girls. Mr. Whitehead and I reported for duty as the new Caretaker and the new Head on the same day. We were both dismayed because the walls were dirty and the paint was peeling; there was no hot water, so that girls washed their hands in cold; electricity had not yet reached the building which was lit by gas; the Gymnasium consisted of an old tin-roofed pavilion at the end of the field opposite the Caretaker's cottage. I was full of plans for developing the School's work, particularly in Science, for, among other things, there was no Chemistry or Physics in the curriculum and there were only ten girls in the Sixth Forms, all doing the same subjects.

I had not been in the School for more than a month when I began to have an exciting series of consultations with architects and planners. It was explained that the School building had been neglected because it was hoped to make improvements and, to build an extension as soon as the new Head Mistress began her work. By 1938 a fine plan, turning the present old building into a quadrangle, was ready and approved. It is old history now, but I still remember my keen distress when, because of the international crisis of 1938, this was postponed and my worse disappointment in 1939 when the war stopped all school building. I was on holiday in Switzerland when I received a letter on August 21st — the date is engraved on my heart as Calais was on Queen Mary's — telling me that the builders had arrived with the first load of bricks. The war broke out a fortnight later and they went away and did not return, except to patch up bomb damage and effect minor changes, until fourteen years later.

During the war, part of Enfield was in the evacuation area, but not the County School. At first the whole school wasn't allowed to assemble together until air raid shelters were built. These were constructed where the Hall and hut classrooms now stand. (the *temporary* huts were finally demolished in 2005).

The nation had expected heavy bombing at once but during the first year of the war London was quiet. Many parents therefore brought their children back from the country, but their school buildings were being used for other purposes. So I was asked to do something for the girls of Edmonton Latymer, Edmonton County and Tottenham High Schools. The numbers suddenly shot up to about 1,000 with some 25 extra Staff. I had to make a time-table for the Staffs and girls of four schools, accommodated in the shelters. Everyone came to school

for two hours a day and had four short lessons and then went home with quantities of prep. It was a great relief when the school buildings were freed and our visitors went home again. I remember the nightmare of lost property when every desk and peg was shared by three girls. Then the bombing began and hardly a day went by when Staff and girls did not troop out into the shelters at the sound of the air-raid siren. The Staff devised ingenious "shelter lessons" and I recall vividly the paintings that decorated the brick walls of one shelter and were the joint efforts of those who happened to occupy that particular spot and had had the chance to seize the paints and brushes when the alarm was given. On the last night of the Easter term of 1941 when, as usual, three members of the Staff were fire-watching in the School, a string of bombs fell across the field, demolishing the gymnasium and two of the shelters and blowing out all the windows and bringing down the ceilings of the rooms at the back of the building. I remember cycling fearfully to school at 3 a.m. that night and finding to my intense relief that the Staff were safe. The building was patched up with hard-board in the windows, so that the gas light had to burn all day for lessons for the rest of the war.

One other day I shall never forget. Towards the end of the war during the period of the flying bombs it was often impossible to reach the shelters before the bomb fell. The Fifth Forms were doing the School Certificate Algebra paper in the class room that is now the Advanced Biology Laboratory when we heard a flying bomb overhead. I rushed in and shouted "Everyone in the corridor away from the glass" and thirty girls fell on top of one another in the lobby outside. I much admired the way they went back after the crash of the bomb to finish the paper with shaking hands but calm courage. This incident had a happy ending for they all passed in Maths. that year; perhaps the examiners who read my letter about the occurrence were extra kind!

After the war we waited impatiently and went through a difficult, wearisome time. The School had now grown in numbers: the Sixth Forms were beginning to multiply; gym lessons were all taught in the old Hall, noisily interrupting other lessons; coachings took place in corridors. So by courtesy of the Grammar School, the First Forms were allowed to use the first floor rooms in Enfield Court, the Grammar Lower School Building, and the Presbyterian Church lent us the use of the hall for gym lessons. If you now find it a rush to move from a Science Laboratory to an Art Room for the next lesson, you may imagine how difficult it was for Staff and girls to be in time, especially when it was raining. Some of last year's VIA who were in the First Forms in the Autumn of 1955, when the new buildings were completed, may remember, if they were there, that I ..reported on Speech Day that for thirty-seven terms

without a break we never lived through one without workmen on the premises

It was a joyful day in September 1955, when we began to use the new classroom block, though the Hall wasn't ready for us till November. And now today, in 1962, after having had a few years when there were actually rooms to spare, the School is overcrowded again and must begin to plan a further extension. You may think my memories seem to be only about the buildings, which are, after all, the least important thing in the intellectual and spiritual development of a living community like a school. But it so happens that in my time as Head I have been forced by history to spend a great deal of thought and time over the housing of the School. Like the Countess in Christopher Fry's play, my memory is "here, there and everywhere, but nowhere long, like a bat in a bedroom." I am ashamed to say that I've always had a bad head for names, as many of you know, but when I look back over twenty-five years, like the jumbled colours of a kaleidoscope, hundreds of great and tiny moments stand out. Perhaps it is natural that I put first those supremely satisfying occasions when a Sixth Form girl came to tell me that she had won an Open Scholarship or the August day when I opened my post to find that the School had been awarded six State Scholarships. Then there are the School Plays produced over the years by Miss Baxter, Miss Flint and Miss Cox. I recall say- a poem in English or French or German or Spanish or Greek with an accent far better than I ever had, or the Choir singing a favourite song with perfect artistry and restraint, or the summer day when Mrs. Wooldridge and I, playing as first couple for the Staff Tennis Team, beat all three couples in the School Six, or receiving a letter from an unknown American lady who wrote to say how impressed she was by the good manners of some Enfield County School girls she had met, or the occasion the tame jackdaw invaded the Hall during Prayers and no one batted an eyelid, or the day . when I said goodbye to you all and was overwhelmingly conscious of your affection and goodwill. It is these memories, and hundreds of others that I have reluctantly left out, that make up the tradition and happy history of Enfield County School to me. But, of course, more important still are the people, the Staff, the Girls, the Old Girls and all those who make it possible for the School to educate generation after generation of Enfield girls' the Education Committee and Governors, the Secretaries and Laboratory Assistants, and Caretakers and Groundsmen, and Canteen Staff and Cleaners.

Perhaps it is no wonder that I have a bad memory for names, for there have been thousands of all these, but their work, their achievements, their thoughtfulness, their kindness will always remain to warm my heart for the rest of my life

## Nanette Whitman (Lucas)-1943-50

I was at Enfield County School from 1943 – 1949 and the first part of that period was spent at Enfield Court in the First Form. Enfield Grammar School's First Form were on the lower floor and we were upstairs. Our Form Mistress was, I think, Miss Bidwell.

I can remember the times when there was an air raid and we all used to hurry down the iron fire escape and sometimes sit for some hour or two in the long dark Air Raid Shelter in the grounds. We would amuse ourselves telling stories which would be continued by the girl next to us. It seemed completely dark and I don't think there was any form of light there.

School dinners were in the basement of the building, which seemed quite fun at the time. We would tell each other all about the latest film we had seen and talk about the plot.

On my 12<sup>th</sup> birthday I managed to fall over in the gravel playground and cut my knee quite badly. Miss Martin had to clean the wound and patch me up. This took some weeks to heal and I seemed to be forever walking with a bandage on my knee as it got infected. I still bear the scar.

Our gym lessons involved rushing from Enfield Court all the way to Old Park Avenue where we would use the Presbyterian church. Running all that way was a feat in itself and we used to arrive puffed out and then have to return again very soon afterwards.

When we graduated to the main building, my form became 2B with Miss Bowen as our Form Mistress. She was very proud of her girls and when asked to name the girls on the Good Work List, she said the whole form! This probably didn't go down too well with the rest of the school. I know, for one, that I never deserved to get on that list.

We all respected our teachers and I never heard anyone who treated them with rudeness or cheeked them. They were people of integrity in our eyes.

Miss Forrest was quite some disciplinarian and frightened the life out of certain girls who, for some reason, were in her bad books, often without cause. Perhaps they had run down a corridor when we should only walk! But I do have Miss Forrest to thank for a trip to Switzerland and Paris soon after the war ended. It was so exciting for us in those days of food rationing and we felt we ate like queens.

Miss Marion was very strict about opening the windows before a French lesson to give the room an airing even in the middle of winter. That was in the days before deodorant was barely on the market!!

Miss Flint was an inspiration with her English teaching and put on the most amazing plays. I can remember being in a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Form when I was one of the 'fairies' called 'Peasblossom'. This required many hours of rehearsals when all the cast had to be present. I certainly know all the score of Mendelssohn's music in my brain note-for-note having heard it time and again. Mrs Thompson was the pianist and she gave many hours of her time with her excellent accompanying.

In our daily assemblies, one of the prefects would play a piece of classical music while we waited for Miss M C Sharp to appear from her Headmistress's room. This was a good introduction into music – the record being played was labelled on a chalk board for us all to see. The assemblies would always have a Christian basis.

When I think of Miss Hodgson, our Gym Mistress (head of department) I always remember her bellowing 'Bully Off' in her hockey lessons. I was put in goal once and was absolutely terrified when the ball was 'dribbled' towards me. Two of my form-mates had nasty accidents on the hockey field and I was sure I might be the next!

How Miss Sharp juggled all our timetables with the shortage of rooms, I will never know. She always remained the acme of calm and was a great headteacher with her example of justice and understanding. Dealing with so many girls was no mean feat. She was also ably supported by her personal secretary, Mrs Taylor, whom we all admired with her smart clothes and friendly personality.

The Sick Bay consisted of a temporary bed in the corridor outside Mrs Taylor's office. I have to admit faking being unwell once when I hadn't managed to learn a French poem which had been set by Miss Marion for our homework. I didn't fancy incurring her wrath so became ill just before our French lesson! I'm sure I made a quick recovery!

Eventually, our year graduated into the temporary prefabricated huts – these have only just been demolished in about 2007. We always seemed to be freezing in those days and had cold after cold. I only wore ankle socks even in the middle of winter.

We had no catering facilities so always had our school lunches at Enfield Grammar School Hall – a special draw to many of us to see the boy of our dreams lurking around the corridor where we had to walk. The ABC café was a regular meeting place after school where we would shyly sit around and exchange the occasional remark. The 6<sup>th</sup> form social club was another treat – one of our teachers had to be present which was a bit inhibiting. We would attempt to dance but never too closely!!

Enfield County was a great part of our growing-up process and we have all been influenced by so much that went on there. I am thankful for being a member of such an excellent school.

Years later, my daughter was also a pupil there and it gave me a great interest in her progress when she was taught by some of the same staff who had been there when I was a girl. So life goes on and there have to be changes. But, we have a lot to be thankful for ECS shaping our future and for ECSOGA for keeping us all in touch. Onward we go and thanks for the vision of some 'girls' to keep the Old Girls together.

## Hazel Robson 1943-50

In the first year being at the Court and having to go all the way to the Presbyterian Church hall for gym.

History homework in the first year was often copying a drawing of an ancient god/vase etc. (Had to cheat sometimes as I was hopeless at drawing – dad helped).

Later, Miss Bowen for Maths last thing Friday afternoon (Auntie Bo-Bo never let up) and it was often Geometry. (How I hated it).

During the War, we had to do an Art exam in the air-raided shelter – paint a picture using 2 colours.

Think it was in the 4<sup>th</sup> year – last day of the Summer Term when the whole school had to do a General Knowledge quiz and our scores were recorded. Then during the holiday we could continue with the second part. Two questions stand out:

a) How many English and French words, of 3 letters or more, can you make from the word CONSTANTINOPLE ?

b) The second task was to name as many books, pictures, buildings etc. associated with your favourite period in History. ( I think I remember this as I won a prize for competing and it was presented on Speech Day).

In the fifth form, Miss Cox was our form mistress and, during the summer holidays, Miss Cox met up with us and took us by train and boat to Hampton Court. (Some of the girls were not returning to the sixth form and Miss Cox wanted us to have a final time together).

One teacher I remember, Miss Rhodes, art teacher, who had a lovely way of helping you – always said “we” and not “you”. Then we heard that she was going to meet the Queen at Buckingham Palace(?) and we witnessed a couple of members of staff teaching her to curtsy.

I can remember several outings:

- a) Theatre to see Michael Redgrave in *Macbeth*
- b) Going to Southgate to see the film *Henry V*
- c) Going to the Rialto to see *Pimpernel Smith*
- d) In the 6<sup>th</sup> form a group of us was allowed to visit the magistrates' court to hear some cases – first time ever. Not allowed to wear school uniform.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> form, I wasn't a prefect, but I still had to take some 'prep' periods. I was told by F Sharp to wear a blazer to cover the place where the prefect's badge was worn.

Current Affairs. M C Sharp addressed the Upper School once a week about world affairs and I found it very interesting, as she was good at “putting it over”. We could knit or sew, but no homework. Anyone caught doing the latter got a detention.

Another of my duties, as I wasn't a prefect, was bell duty – ringing the electric bell and hand bell for the start and end of lessons. (It was to help me get into Training College). Once, while ringing the hand bell, it came apart and just missed my feet as 4 members of staff walked round the corner. (The hand bell was for the benefit of the people in the 'prefabs').

Incidentally, I got into training college, and by the time I retired, I had been Head of two Infant Schools..

## Ann Mephram (King) 1945-52

Every time I scrape the last scraps from a jar of jam or marmalade I think of Miss Hodgson sitting on a small waterproof groundsheet at Guide Cadet camp, insisting that nothing was to go to waste. Her technique was masterly, no jam jar was washed up until she had pronounced it empty. I was no good at gym, only fair at netball and hockey, and, as for rounders — well, the least said the better — but camping was fine, whatever the weather. We always had fun at camp and saw a completely different, and more relaxed side to Miss Hodgson and Miss F Sharp.

Other memories: Miss Russell getting us to speak French very well, despite some difficult vowels, Miss Benjamin insisting on the final chord of *Jerusalem* lasting the correct number of beats, (so well drummed in that I hold it even today), Miss Morley doing her very best to get my Maths good enough to attain School Certificate and finally, Miss James, in her first year of teaching art, burdened with a class trying to sew decorated bags and cookery aprons. We must have been a noisy lot because she read *Sherlock Holmes* stories to us to keep us quiet.



It was quite an eye-opener to come back to ECS some eleven or twelve years later as a member of staff teaching Domestic Science and to meet these same teachers, and many others as colleagues, and most of them were very welcoming.

Both my time as a pupil and then as a teacher were very enjoyable.

## Jean Potter (Nightingale)

1946-49

As many may remember, I joined ECS in September 1946, the war had ended and my father had been transferred from Suffolk to London. ECS was quite different from the boarding school I had attended in Norfolk throughout most of the war. Also we were doing the Cambridge School Certificate whereas ECS did the London. My father and I had an interview with Miss M C Sharp prior to the beginning of term, and MC said I would never pass the exam, I can remember my father saying later "we'll show Miss Sharp and you will pass"!

The Vth year was work, work, work and yet more work. My only 'freedom' was being allowed to attend 14<sup>th</sup> Enfield Guide Company meetings on a Friday night, and the evening service at St Andrews Church on Sundays. Dad arranged for extra private lessons for German, as it was one of my weak subjects. The summer of 1947 came and - hey ho! I'd passed! First Year VIth began and, to my utter amazement, I was made a prefect!

Second year VIth was a new experience. Again to my surprise I was made Head Girl. Wow! To this day I do not know how or why but I survived, as did the other 599 pupils. We were a school of 600 and fitted nicely into the hall in what is now known as the Broome Building. My big disadvantage in those days was that I stuttered. My parents had previously arranged for me to have Elocution lessons in order to overcome this impediment. I had been to Miss Peabody in London Road and she had the unenviable task of trying to teach me to overcome the stutter. However, no amount of weekly lessons had been effective and I continued to stutter. Then in September 1948 I had the frightening thought of standing on the platform in front of 600 girls in order to speak to them. It must have been sheer fright as my stutter disappeared 'overnight'! I can always remember standing at the foot of my parents' bed rehearsing what I had to say from the platform the next day! The stutter has never returned!

My sister, Dawn, joined ECS in January 1949. As you can imagine Dawn and her friends 'enjoyed a lovely time' (?!), she in the 1<sup>st</sup> Form and me as Head Girl! She has always maintained that she was forever being compared with me by the Staff which did not help her, Dawn being the tomboy of the family! On one occasion she was involved with some activity which entailed being on the roof of The Court, (the Lower Grammar School) which housed the 1<sup>st</sup> Year boys' on the ground floor and the 1<sup>st</sup> Year girls on the first floor!! She often recalls the times when she and her friends were in the town and saw me (or any other prefect) coming, they would pop into a shop to buy sweets! Eating in the street, and especially whilst in school uniform, was NOT allowed! Dawn did, however, excel at sport and was a member of several of the School and House teams.

In 1949 it was the tradition and privilege for the mother of the Head Girl to present the prizes on Sports Day. I think my mother was more concerned about her appearance and not letting me down than anything else! There is a lovely photograph in the ECSOGA Memorabilia Collection of Mum presenting Janet Cormack with a prize. Pat Horex (Newby) referred to this during the afternoon meeting of ECSOGA in March 2008.

One amusing incident which stands out in my memory concerned my white girdle! I had been away for the week-end and Mum had done the washing which included my navy knickers! Somehow, my white girdle managed to end up in the wash with the knickers! (No colour catcher in those days!). Mum was horrified as it was no longer white! The only thing she could think of doing was to telephone Miss F Sharp (at home!) to 'confess' and to ask what she should do!! F Sharp (as one would expect) told her not to worry about it she would sort it out when I was next in School. I was duly 'presented' with a new white girdle!

I must end by saying that I have always regretted that I did not spend a full 7 years at ECS. Since being Chair of ECSOGA I have realised more than ever what a privilege it was to have been part of this superb school and how proud I am that not only was I Head Girl (after only two years!) but also Chair of ECSOGA for four.

I am sure, as Old Girls, we will continue to go ONWARD EVER even if we do not have a Newsletter and an Old Girls' Association meeting to attend twice a year.

## Gillian Phillips (Napier 1948-53)

Gwyneth? No, that's wrong, surely it was Gwendolyn? We never had any proof, now I come to think of it; it was pure conjecture, but somehow, 'Gwendolyn' seemed to suit the lively grace with which she moved, regardless of her handicap. But Gwyneth it must have been all along, Gwyneth Morley. My friend Pamela Tratt had a crush on her. I had a crush on Doris Cox. Every year I prayed that she would be our form's English teacher but every year except one it was Miss Walles. She it was who decided that we should all change our handwriting to Marion Richardson script. My handwriting was perfectly good before, but after that it fell between two stools, neither one nor the other, and has felt awkward ever since.

I loved English passionately but all Miss Walles seemed to notice was my failure to master the handwriting she had imposed. Then, against all odds, I actually came top of the school in GCE English language and literature. I'd love to have stayed on to the 6th form, and maybe read English at Cambridge as my brother did, but I was only in the second stream (my maths was bad, despite Gwyneth's best efforts) so I had no Latin or Greek. Besides which, the results came out in the holidays, after I'd left school and was preparing to go to Hornsey Art School. I wonder, now, that no-one ever suggested that I might find a way of doing something with my English..

Hornsey, all six years of it, gave me a very broad education and I have Mrs Hargrave/Westman to thank for that. Where else could you learn (apart from the obvious art aspects of painting, drawing, sculpture, pottery, etching, engraving, lithography, silk screen printing, type setting, calligraphy, stage design etc. etc.) also something of literature- from illustration and book binding, history- of art and all related to it, anatomy, geometry and (dreadful word) pedagogy. Plus we had a jazz club, a madrigal choir, a folk group and a recorder consort. So I am very grateful for this although, of course, when I eventually started teaching at Hillingdon I was labelled as 'only' the art teacher. No one seemed to notice the narrow mindedness and lack of culture amongst, say, the geography, science or business studies staff. I was so disappointed in that staffroom (and yes, it was a grammar school) having always regarded the E.C.S. staffroom as the epitome of wisdom and learning, which was my inspiration for training to be a teacher in the first place.

I still regret not having the chance to go to Cambridge especially when I read of all the qualifications of other E.C.S. girls, but I am finally getting some of my poetry

published anyway. And, despite Miss Thomas not accepting me for the school choir, I am now winning Festivals and have sung the alto solos in the Messiah (twice), Elijah (twice), Mozart's Requiem and Vivaldi's Gloria. And at 71 I am still in demand as a supply teacher and loving it. I like to think that perhaps I am carrying a small spark of wisdom from that holy of holies (at least in my day) the E.C.S. staffroom.

## Dilys Pollard (Thomas) Staff 1946 - 1950

I could not believe my luck when I was appointed to join the staff of Enfield County School after only two years teaching experience. I came in September 1946 and found a very happy community and a much respected and kind Headmistress, so different from the school I had just left. I was given a warm welcome in the staffroom, even though I felt very nervous as a new young member sharing a small table with four mistresses.

I remember my first Assembly well. Silence in the hall while recorded music was played, before Miss M.C. Sharp opened the door and walked calmly on to the stage to read from the Bible, announced the hymn which everyone sang with enthusiasm - all the girls and the staff who sat on the stage behind Miss Sharp. As I sat at the piano I had to concentrate on the prayers in order to play the "Amen" at the appropriate time. Later, I found different forms of Assemblies, always taken with quiet dignity. I had regular discussions with the two girls, who were responsible for the music, about records suitable for the occasion.

When I first arrived I was alarmed to find that the Music Room was next to Miss Sharp's room, She would be aware of any music we sang or played on that very old record player. She occasionally commented, favourably, fortunately. The room was bitterly cold in the winter. The windows were very draughty and had not been replaced because of more urgent repairs after the war, so I wore special gloves to play the piano!

My trips to Enfield Court, where 1st Forms were taught on the first floor, were marathon efforts. I often ran most of the way to try and beat the bells, both to reach the first form and back to the Music Room where I found the girls behaving very responsibly coping with their set work. I found a 1st Form at the Court was in the capable hands of Eve Barsham who played the previous week's new song and taught words and music, from memory, to the class before I arrived, I knew then that this 1st Form girl was destined for a great musical future, How right I was.

Weekly Choir practices were enjoyable occasions. There

was a great variety, and for Speech Day and Prize giving we practised, for example, Thomas Linley's *Still the Lark Finds Repose*; *Arrangement of a Welsh Lullaby*; *the Bluebird* by Stanford Songs for Massed Singing were required for the whole school.

I was lucky to have an accompanist, Miss Bertha Kenworthy, a professional pianist, while I could stand on the stage to guide over a hundred pupils to sing a suitable song for Speech Day. One year it was Sullivan's *Orpheus with his lute*, another year it was Schubert's *Cronos the Charioteer*.

The Enfield Music Festival with its competitive spirit was at first a surprise, reminding me of the Welsh Eisteddfod. It was gratifying to find ECS gaining the Senior and Junior Trophies in my first year.

The annual Carol Service included Solos as well as Carols sung by the School and visitors. The choir usually sang an anthem, once from Rutland Boughton's *Bethlehem*.

The Empire Youth Service at the Cinema meant more anthems for Choir and the whole school, for example *Had we but hearkened* from *Solemn Melody* by Walford Davies or *Creations Hymn* by Beethoven.

Apart from these usual musical activities, there were many visits to concerts, such as the Robert Mayer Concerts, particularly enjoyable, when Sir Michael Tippett came to conduct his *Child of our Time* which was very new at that time. In October 1946 Sir Robert and Lady Mayer decided to launch a new magazine called *Crescendo*, which not only gave programme notes but interesting articles on composers, performers, instruments of the orchestra and much more. We had *Crescendo* No.1 (6d old money) and continued to attend concerts until we reached No.29 April 1950. The girls were very pleased to go to the Central Hall on Saturday mornings once a month and others sometimes went to the Ernest Read Concerts, or to Covent Garden to see *The Magic Flute*.

Collecting the exact copy of an Elizabethan Virginals from the Dolmetsch family in Surrey was an amazing experience. A Sixth form girl accompanied me to carry it across London, uncovered, up the escalators and then on the trolley bus to Enfield - without mishap. It was a joy to play it for Miss Flint's production of *The Merchant of Venice*.

I spent four very happy years at ECS before I left to get married. Miss Sharp was an outstanding Headmistress, set such an example that we all tried to do our best. I hope that my love of music was communicated to some others. I could not believe that according to *Onward Ever* every girl took part in my Farewell Concert in 1950.

## Jeanne Pimentel (Duval) 1946-51

I once wrote a small poem that started "My youth was all yearning". True, there was much I longed to do and to have and to be, but along with that my enthusiasm for life made my young years exciting and enjoyable, at least in retrospect.

I even liked school! I may have paid lip service to not wanting to go, but in fact I never wanted to be absent – I might miss something!

Fortunately for me, academics came easily– well, except math (fine up to algebra, but trig was beyond my brain) and art (for which I simply had no aptitude). I usually came top of the class, not because I was brilliant, but because I had a knack for cramming and taking exams. In fact I seldom did homework if I could get away without it. Yet I always got a prize on Speech Day.

And yet I yearned -- for athletic prowess; those who excelled at sports were my heroes and the ones I wanted to run with, not the "brainy" girls like the tall trio, Shirley E., Shirley T, and Suzanne. But I never got further than reserve on the sports teams I aspired to, in spite of practicing every lunchtime (dashing to the lockers to get a netball, or rushing to claim a space on the brick wall we used for tennis practice). I watched in admiration and envy as graceful long-limbed Chris (Anne) Gardner smashed an ace, or floated over a vaulting horse. It was small comfort that she came to me and begged for help with her Latin homework.

There were some subjects I applied myself to because I loved them. Excellent teachers, like Miss Flint and Miss Cox made English a delight, and even Miss Wallace didn't damage my affinity. My most cherished achievement was perhaps winning the Junior Poetry Prize (in the second form, competing against third formers), Re-reading the poem now, I find it utterly derivative, but the good side of that is that I can still recite many verses of the poets I admired and emulated.

I was good at foreign languages, which infuriated two senior staff, F. Sharp (Latin), and Miss Marion (French), because I did not behave as they wished. "Effie" never forgave me for choosing to take German instead of Greek, and Miss Marion resented the fact that such a naughty pupil could have a French name and good accent. I was never in her class, but she knew me; once she caught me running in the hall and made me run up and down three flights of steps twenty times till my blood pounded in my head – a punishment which hardly fit the crime.

I couldn't even think of liking history because the teachers were such objects of ridicule. Fuddy-duddy Miss Barker and Miss Rudkin were not only boring but could

not maintain discipline, so I spent their classes passing notes, reading under the desk, and talking behind their back; only later did I realize that I might have loved that subject then—as I do now—if I had paid attention.

My ease with academics, and my relative popularity, did much to boost my morale, which could easily have been squashed by my socio-economic status. I came from a working-class family, and my father lost his job as a chauffeur to a mysterious illness, and he died three weeks before I sat for GCE. I was keenly aware that my clothes were always home-made or cheap quality, and I realize now what a blessing school uniforms were as a leveler.

In my fifth-form year, M.C. Sharp, hearing that I planned to leave, summoned my mother and urged her to let me take A levels, assuring her that I would get a place at university. But it was out of the question for me to remain at home as a dependent for two years; I started work that August and paid my mother a pound a week for my keep. Though Mummy was sorry to have to say no, I don't think she felt too terrible as no one in our family had gone to college and it was not generally expected in those days.

And I didn't care; my closest friends were all going to secretarial school and looking forward to a sophisticated life in London. The only training I might have coveted was at RADA; I had acted in every school and class play I could, and yearned to make it a profession. So to get as close as I could to the field, I wrote to the BBC to ask if they could employ me, and was accepted in a six-week secretarial course and started earning £2.17.5 per week.

So my career at ECS was relatively short, but has yielded many memories. Here are a few more scenes, impressions, incidents, and emotions from those years.

In 1946 the first form was housed in the Court, where in summer we leapt off the Anderson bomb shelters doing "pancakes" into the piles of mown grass below, and in winter—the phenomenal three months of snow in 1947—we spent lunch hours sliding down parallel courses of inch-thick ice.

Ann Teare was my best friend at Raglan elementary school, and continued as such for all five years at ECS (and long after), with occasional lapses into temporary alliances with others like Alison Young. Ann had a gorgeous soprano voice and was invited into the choir, which then accepted me just to keep her happy, I'm sure. But I still remember some of those complex Handel arias note for note today.

Ann and I shared a passion for horses, and in the first form were so determined to have our own pony we brought all the possessions we could spare to school to sell for our horse fund. The amazed staff came up with some obscure edict that said such a collection was against the rules, and our hopes were dashed.

My children can't believe that we sat cross-legged on the floor every single morning at assembly, with its ritual of music, religion, and announcements, during which my wandering mind would count the number of rows in differ-

ent pupils' plaits, or judge the merits of the wardrobe and hairstyles of the staff on the platform (and try to get a peek at Miss Rudkin's knickers), or wonder why M.C. had such dark circles under her eyes ,... or just daydream.

Though I never meant to be naughty and was far from a rebel, I seemed to have a penchant for being on the wrong side of the rules. I never walked if I could run, talked too much in class, couldn't stay neat or clean, and was easily distracted by a tree to climb or a fence to jump over. The only real mischief I remember was bringing two pet white mice to school. We kept them hidden in our clothes until they got too squirmly and then we put them into an empty desk before class began, without realizing that the usual inkwell was missing. Our eyes were glued to the hole expecting a pink nose to emerge any minute, and when the teacher actually sat on the desk while she talked we nearly burst with trepidation. I wonder if she ever knew!

Later, when the "white girdle" scheme was instituted, I suddenly decided I wanted to be a model, respected student. Posture and academics were not a problem, but I could never get past the first few weeks of a term without a late mark, or reprimand, if not a detention, to blot my record.

I may have appeared to have self-confidence, but in fact it was very fragile. I was sensitive to criticism and self-conscious about my physical faults. I don't think I could have stood the scrutiny of boys in the classroom, so for me the all-girls school was a blessing. And having wild crushes on teachers and sixth-formers gratified my exuberant preteen nature without being complicated by any sexual connotations.

Later though, as "boys" became an important element, our lives became both exciting and agonized with the proximity of the Grammar School. At first I alternated between professing disdain for girls who wore makeup and talked about boys, and obsessively wondering which heartthrob would be lounging by the porch as we marched to the Grammar School hall for lunch. For some of us, cutting off our long plaits at 13 was a sort of rite of passage. Later the ABC cafe after school was the social scene, though I never felt I was part of the central clique there, much though I yearned to be. (There began the pattern that characterized most of my romantic life: I was always attracted to someone other than the boy who was attracted to me).

We were fortunate in being within visiting distance of London, and many of the cultural field trips enriched my life enormously. Even though what I remember most clearly were often petty details: falling in love with Michael Redgrave's gravelly red hair at the Old Vic; and noticing the much heralded "new look" skirt length for the first time on a group of fashionable women at the Tower of London.

Looking back, I believe some aspects of the structure of the school provided a benefit that is sadly lacking in schools today, and contributes to the alienation many youngsters feel. Having a home room fostered friendships, loyalty, and a sense of security, of being at home. Assignment to



Houses crossed the divisions of classes and years, and provided another level of healthy competition. Sports may have been the biggest contest, but I remember things like the flower displays on the windowsills of the hall as well. I think most girls felt they belonged, in more ways than one.

As for the quality of my education at ECS, I can only say it was uneven, but as good as or better than any I would have received at any other state secondary school at that time. Many years later, when I worked with educators making filmstrips to accompany textbooks, where the emphasis was on inquiry-based learning, I realized how much rote learning we did at ECS, with little stimulus to curiosity or imagination. Nevertheless, as an adult I was always assumed to be well educated, and when, thirty years after leaving school, I finally applied to college, my transcripts from ECS (yes, the school actually produced them on demand!) qualified me to enter at the best public university in America—UC Berkeley—after taking only a few supplementary classes.

And our school motto has served me well; I never spent time on regrets but took life as it came: Onward Ever

### **I J Feaver (Dunwoody) 1947-55**

On the first day of the autumn term 1947 I cycled with my friends Pat & Maureen to ECS, clad in my brand new school uniform and a second-hand school hat (berets were not introduced till later). We gathered outside the school and in due course we were ushered into assembly. Here the form lists were read out and the first form was grouped by age, so I was in 1J with Pat; Maureen was in 1F. We made our way to The Court and upstairs to our classroom and were given our timetable. For French and Maths we were put into sets, but most lessons took place in our form-room. The science lab was in our building at the Court, but for gym we had to make our way back to the main school building. I hated gym because we were arranged in height order; as I was the tallest, it meant I became a team leader. Miss Hodgson used the team leaders to demonstrate each exercise, which was always a penance as I was clumsy. When choosing a team for netball, I chose my friends first; as we were all rabbits at games it meant we always lost! For English Reading, the topic was Greek and Norse Mythology.

Miss Walles (the English teacher) told us we would be doing a play - she cast it according to who she thought would remember the lines best, so I was given a main part. It was an adaptation of a tale by Sir Walter Scott; I was playing an outlaw who had a daughter, played by Eve Barsham, and Pat was the prince I was in conflict with. We were reconciled in the second act - what I remember is that I was supposed to kneel and kiss Pat's hand in the performance she forgot to put her hand out so I was left vainly fishing for it. In later years the staff teaching English had discovered who could act and who couldn't, so by the 4th year I was a mere slave.

In the form room I sat in the last but one row and Pat sat behind me. When we were doing a History exam Pat thumped me in the back and passed me a note asking 'who was Hannibal?' (she'd been away sick). I wrote 'Carthaginian general in Punic wars'. Another thump 'What did he do?' 'Crossed the Alps to make war on Rome' Afterwards I asked her 'Why did you do that question?' She got a better mark than me, which I felt was unfair but we were not discovered.

I had a cold the last week of the winter term, so I missed both the party and carol service - I only found out about them at the second form.

The second form was 2L - Miss Leeming. This was the year I began Latin with Miss Sharp. When doing the register Miss Sharp looked at me and said 'Why do I know you?' I said nervously that it was because I was a Guide - I'd joined the group in the first form, but it had been disbanded in the second year because the teacher who led it left. I'd left my church Guide group to join the school one, so I didn't feel able to go back and resume, so my Guide experience was curtailed.

The third form was under Miss Russell (3R), in room 1. This year the form outing was to the London Docks, which were vastly more interesting then because the commentator on our boat had a copy of Lloyds Register and so as we went past the ships he would tell us where they were from and what the cargo was. This was also the time when Miss Cox set the Shakespeare Quiz. There were 64 questions and those who got full marks went into a further round. Eve Barsham & I both got a full score so we had a playoff, which I won and received a Book Token - I forget what I used it for now.

The Junior School Play was '*A Midsummer Nights Dream*', produced by Miss Flint. I was a stage hand; Miss Cox was stage manager. She had prepared a book with all the stage-hands' moves by numbers from which I copied out a prompt for each number so that everyone had their own. As stage hands we were allowed to sit in the wings and watch the performance, so that by the time the run finished I could quote the play by heart. We did *Julius Caesar* for A levels and I was most fed up when I opened the Eng. Lit. paper to find that the alternative I could have had was '*A Midsummer Nights Dream*!'

In the 4th year I was in 4W with Miss Wallis. We did not like being 4W, so we went to the School Council and complained about our lowly form name. We knew we were the A - stream, so it was hard to explain to strangers that we were 4W. The Council discussed possible renaming and voted for L for Latin, S for Spanish and DS for Domestic Science. When I moved up to the 5th form it was therefore 5L with Mrs Hart. We were only allowed to take 8 'O' Levels so I thankfully dropped Greek.

3R -This was the year when several of the staff fell ill and we had temporary replacements. The one taking Miss Tomlinson's place couldn't keep order, and I began to dislike science. The people replacing Miss Maude were a series of students who never looked to see what we had already covered so we had 'the life of a tadpole' over and over again! The replacement for Miss Sharp was a dedicated classicist so I began to like Latin. She told us many times that whilst Latin was a treat, Greek was marvellous and I got unduly influenced so that I chose Greek for the 4th form. Miss Sharp was back by then, and although I realised I'd made a mistake, the others doing Greek were on at me to keep up as there was a minimum of 5 for the course to run. I kept doing Biology as I had no desire to learn German - I had enough trouble with French pronunciation! - though many of the class did, as they thought Biology was all tadpoles.

4W - — This year the school visit was to the Festival of Britain - on the way there we had a train to ourselves. At the Festival site, only Gloria and I wanted to go round the Science & Technology side - we were supposed to be threesomes, so we had to avoid the area where the (school) staff on duty were. We followed the route suggested by the Promoters and ended up in the Dome of Discovery. My brother was confined to bed with TB, so I was charged in particular with telling him my impressions of it but I found the darkness and heat overbearing so couldn't manage to stay in it long. However one of our neighbours took me back there in the summer holidays so I was able to follow the other trail and take in more of the Dome.

5L -King George VI died during the year, so we were summoned to the Assembly Hall one morning to be told that he had died. We sang 'God save the King' for the last time, and adjourned to our form rooms. A good many were crying, but some of us stood by the stove and wondered out loud what would happen next until Maureen, who had been crying, told us to stop.

Lower 6th - Examination year. I was jolly glad I was not taking my A levels that year, as the coronation ceremonies were at exam time! The school was given a sum of money to mark the new Queen's Coronation, but instead of giving us all mugs, the staff chose to buy a set of chairs for the hall.

**Audrey Walker, VI A**  
***ECS Magazine Autumn 1953***  
**CORONATION DAY**

On the morning of June the second, my alarm clock woke me at half-past four and, as I stopped its insistent ring, I remembered that this was the day of all days-Coronation Day!

I hurriedly tumbled out of bed, and went downstairs. My mother, who had woken too, said she would prepare my breakfast while I washed and dressed. I then sat down to

egg and bacon at five o'clock in the morning. After this I cycled to School, with my haversack full of food, to meet the other girls, who had been fortunate enough to be members of the party from our School, going to see the Coronation Procession.

Alas, the weather was not very promising, but that was a secondary consideration, as my fellow companions all seemed as excited as I was. Eventually, we set off for our destination, after waiting for the inevitable latecomers. Miss Marion and Miss Benjamin, the two staff accompanying us, had checked each girl and made sure that everyone was wearing her School uniform.

Everywhere along the way was decorated with Union Jacks, flags of all nations and gay bunting in honour of the occasion. At last the bus arrived at the Victoria Embankment, and the School party walked briskly in orderly double file to its allotted space, with two of the girls carrying the board proclaiming which school we were. Many schools were already there, of different ages, and all were chattering and very excited.

Several yards away from our party was the B.B.C. Television Camera Unit, which, like the School, was waiting for the Procession to pass on its way to Westminster Abbey. Then, at last, we heard cheering at the far end of the route, and the Mayor's coach and escort gradually came into view. It was a splendid, glittering vehicle and the Mayor, in his official robes, waved from the windows.

The representatives of foreign states came next, in open landaus, Queen Salote of Tonga being one of them. After them came the Prime Ministers and Sir Winston and Lady Churchill, both waving and smiling. In limousines and private cars the peers swept by and we only just glimpsed them but the members of the Royal Family, the Duchess of Kent and Princess Alexandra, we saw very clearly. The Queen Mother and Princess Margaret both looked very proud and happy on this memorable day.

Then, as the scarlet coats and black busbies of a thousand Guardsmen came into sight, we knew that this heralded the climax of the Procession. They were followed by the Royal Horse Artillery, the Yeomen of the Guard in their picturesque uniforms, the Queen's Barge Master and Watermen, the Royal Horse Guards Band and a Sovereign's Escort of Household Cavalry. The eight magnificent greys drawing the Queen's golden, fairy-tale coach appeared and the Queen, with a diadem on her head, with the Duke of Edinburgh wearing Admiral's uniform by her side, looked absolutely radiant. Hundreds of children shouted themselves hoarse cheering Her Majesty and she seemed to give those intimate smiles that were meant for each one of us. All too quickly Her Majesty disappeared from our sight, and the officers and equeuries of the Royal Household and another Escort of Household Cavalry rode past. For the schools, the Procession was over, but the memories of the wonderful sights and sounds will leave a lasting impression of the pomp and pageantry of historical England.

## **Marjorie Taylor & Jan Farebrother School Office Managers 1946-2001**

Marjorie Taylor and Jan Farebrother managed the school office between 1946 and 2001. Marjorie worked with three head mistresses and Jan with two. Needless to say education changed dramatically over those years and therefore the role of the office changed. However, some functions remained the same - HM's right hand, welfare of the students and support for the teaching staff. Marjorie particularly remembers - the Caretaker, Mr. Whitehead, coming back from Prisoner of War camp and amazingly resuming his duties, quite soon organising the 6th Form Leavers Dance (full evening dress) and parties for the Old Folk; Miss Sharp's farewell - a grand affair with a marquee in the grounds and a service at St. Andrews Church; cramped office space in the original building, a bed in the corridor outside the office for sick pupils; HM's coffee arriving in the 'dumb waiter' from the kitchen! The 'new' building went up in 1965 - at last more space, a proper Medical room and a Welfare Assistant, who also helped with Tuck Shop, uniforms etc.

Marjorie remembers a flood in HM's room where the original registers (all hand written) had to be rescued; the bell which stood on Miss Sharp's roll-top desk - everyone knocked and did not enter until the bell was rung! The major change during Marjorie's employment was the school becoming Comprehensive - a challenging time. Miss Hogg was the new HM and the difficulties of organising the school on two sites (which she did extremely well) began - greatly increased numbers of students and staff - from 3 form entry to 8. Staff having to move between sites which made timetabling a challenge! Dinner registers were a nightmare. Speech Days were very formal. Miss Pagan became HM after Miss Hogg and faced the ever increasing disciplinary problems on two sites which she dealt with in her inimitable style - firm but fair.

During Jan's years at the school, for a short while with Miss Pagan and the remainder with Miss Byard, the changes were relentless! 'Baker Days' (INSET - In Service training for Teachers); LMS (Local Management of Schools - arranging our own Bank Accounts and being responsible for the school Budget) maintenance of the grounds and the buildings - Collegiate System; Careers Education and Work Experience and of course Computers both in the office and the classroom. Statistics for the Local Authority and the Government became a job in itself! Office and non-teaching staff numbers and hours increased to keep up with all the changes thrust upon schools nationwide. Miss Byard presided over the building of the new Gymnasium, Music/Drama block (the school still had the only double storey Horsa building in the Country for a Gym!) and also the building of the Languages/Sixth Form Suite.

Jan particularly remembers amongst many funny, sad and

unexpected incidents, the fire in HM's room on the 20th July 1988 (I remember the date because it was the day of my Silver Wedding Anniversary!) getting a phone call from Mr. White the caretaker at 6 a.m. saying I had better come in as there had been a fire in HM's room - it was a mess - telephones and light fittings melted, blackened furniture and walls, fortunately it had not spread (we thought it was probably a disgruntled ex-student); also coming in one day to see a canoe in the Copula (or a boat in Belfry!) on the roof of the Old Building! (probably a dare carried out by one of the Grammar School boys). The excitement of the expedition to the Sahara Desert - a real adventure for the girls and staff all those years ago.

We both thoroughly enjoyed our role helping to keep the school day running smoothly, answering queries from staff, students and parents, dealing with problems about maintenance of buildings and grounds, school meals, uniforms, annual audits, Form 7, supplies and suppliers, statistics for the Local Authority, staff appointments etc. etc. and, most important, supporting the Head Mistress.

No two days were the same, constant interruptions were part of the job (the Secretary's office for many years was between HM's Office (or later the General Office) and the Staff Room - three doors HM, Staff, Students and Visitors - certainly kept you on your toes! The telephones never stopped ringing!

The school year now is very different from Jan's time in office and almost unrecognisable for Marjorie, who was presented with her old manual Remington typewriter when she retired!

However the school office is still the hub of the school and our motto was always to help in anyway we could to support the Head Mistress and the teaching staff to do their difficult job - educating the next generation.

## **Janet Naylor ( Riley) 1949-54**

Looking back over the five and a third years I spent at Enfield County certain events spring to mind.

In those days, before all the new buildings appeared, the first year was spent mainly at, what we called the Court, which was in reality Enfield Court. This building, that stood on the corner of Parsonage lane and Baker Street, was built around 1690 and enlarged in 1864. We shared this building with the boys from Enfield Grammar, the girls upstairs and the boys downstairs. At one point there was a fire at the Court and the rumour went round that it was started by someone who did not approve of boys and girls using the same building. Not that we ever mixed, having different playtimes.

We started the day at the main Enfield County School and then walked over to the Court for lessons. As I only lived in Parsonage Lane it was simple for me to go home for

lunch. In fact I never stayed for school dinners in my years at the County. At one point I was the only person in my class to go home to eat. We had about 1½ hours for lunch so there was plenty of time.

The shelters, four of them, were still in situ and were supposed to be 'out of bounds' but we used to jump from the top when no one was looking.

Two events spring readily to mind, I can't remember which years they occurred in. The first, which I only heard about, happened in one of the Science labs. Now all of you scientists know what happens when you put a piece of sodium in water, it fizzes and scoots round like a firework. On this particular day the class urged the science teacher to put a bigger piece of sodium in to the water, with inevitable results, a large explosion! Well largish!

The second incident happened on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Our form, we were probably 3L at that time, really went to town. First of all the music for assembly somehow turned out to be *Whose afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?*, then, unaccountably the staff could not open the staff room door, it must have locked itself, and finally someone put cochineal in the water system and it came out red in the labs. I had a dentist's appointment in the afternoon so I escaped the wrath of the 'gods', not that I had anything to do with it, of course.

School Days, the happiest days of our lives.

## Nola Owers (Usher)-1957-63

Hooray, the results of the 11+ were out and I was going to my first choice in September 1957, Enfield County School. I remember the excitement beforehand when we received a daunting list of uniform requirements to be obtained only from D H Evans in Oxford Street. This was the first indication that the school was somewhat elitist.

In the first few days of term the new girls were asked whether their mother had been to the school, and I always felt that the daughters of previous pupils were more favourably treated than us lesser mortals. The first year girls were divided by age into four forms, 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D and were each assigned a 'house'. The register was called each morning by surname - how strange - and I can still remember the first few names.

Shortly after the beginning of term there was a bus strike lasting about three weeks. Some girls relied on lifts from drivers apparently unknown to them, whilst one or two girls dropped out altogether never to return.

School rules were fairly strict, amongst them:

berets had to be worn with winter uniform to and from school, and a member of staff would check that we were wearing one with badge showing, even under the hood of our dark green gabardine raincoats.

times for the beginning and end of the school day were set so as not to coincide with those of the boys' grammar school, just across the footpath in Holly Walk, lest we should be tempted to converse with the members of the opposite sex who inhabited the building opposite, which was strictly forbidden.

girls who pushed up the sleeves of their jumpers were accused of appearing to be doing the washing up and were ordered to pull them down immediately.

For me, horror set in after our first gym lesson when we were required to walk to the showers completely naked in front of the teacher. There was no way I was going to do that and managed, as far as I can remember, to avoid ever having a shower!

Lessons were exciting and different with pupils changing from room to room throughout the day with a different mistress for each subject. Even the school dinners were enjoyable, I had never had school dinners before, mind you, by the 3rd year the novelty had worn off and sandwiches were the order of the day.

Two of the mistresses I particularly remember who stood me in good stead for adult life were Miss Cox (English) and Miss Bowen (Maths) and I felt privileged to have been taught by them.

My happiest times in the school were the first and sixth years. The intervening years seem a blur of increasingly difficult lessons interspersed with speech days, exams, rather highbrow school plays for recreation and quite probably a host of other things I cannot remember.

The last year of my school life was spent in the secretarial sixth form which I thoroughly enjoyed, there being a more relaxed atmosphere overall. On our last day in July 1963 we exchanged autographs and bade fond farewells to our compatriots to start another chapter in our lives.

At that time I felt that I had received a good all round education, but also that if ever I had children of my own, I would send them to a co-ed school, which eventually I did.



## Joyce Anelay (Clarke 1958–1965)

A love of learning – that's the gift I received from ECS. And it's still vital today.

Going to a grammar school in the late 1950s was daunting. I was the first in my family to do so. I was in trouble on the very first day for wearing a yellow ribbon round my pony-tail. No, not a mark of early rebellion. I'd never worn a full uniform before and it never occurred to me that rules covered hair ribbons!

The staff were devoted to their task of giving us the opportunity to succeed in finding and developing any talents that might be tucked away somewhere, and I have the happiest of memories of my seven years at ECS.

Miss Sparkes managed to make me read French well and enjoyably – though the ability to speak it very well was too elusive in my brain even for her to discover its whereabouts. I still love reading French – and have since learned Italian to a very modest standard. Arabic next.

Miss Cox coaxed me into the smallest bit parts in the school plays and I remain ever grateful for those first opportunities to brave appearing in front of an audience – even though it was so biased and wanted to applaud regardless.

Mrs Leigh took me on school visits to Spain and Austria, my first overseas travel. By steam train not plane in those days. Wonderful. When I became a teacher myself later and took sixth formers overseas on history tours I appreciated exactly how heart-stopping it can be for a teacher to have charge of pupils abroad.

And of course Mrs Martin and Miss Chancellor let my love of history blossom. Together with 15 friends I have just celebrated 40 years of graduation from Bristol University where I read history.

Perhaps the only bleak moment was the mock General Election in 1964. We were allocated roles to play. Could I be the Conservative candidate? No, that job was taken. So I was appointed the Liberal Election Agent. I have ensured that real life has not repeated that moment!

It has given me pleasure to recall the past. But far more important is the future education and opportunity that await all those who pass through doors of the School. I wish them all the happiest of times.

## Heather Leigh (nee Spence) Staff 1957-72

In June 1957 I finished my teacher training course at Bristol University, having graduated the previous year from Southampton University. I needed a job in London because my fiancé was working there. There was only one job that I could find in north London, but this was a grade 2 and obviously was looking, I assumed, for somebody with experience. It was to teach Latin, French and Spanish. I had all three languages in my degree. I was particularly keen to get a post in north London and applied for the job. I was short listed. At the interview there were six of us, myself and five others who had all been teaching for at least one year. They too were particularly interested in the Spanish. The Education Officer, Mr. Pascal, asked me why I had applied for a scale 2 post when it was my first teaching post. I explained that there were no other jobs offering Spanish except this one and then naively said - I'm quite willing to receive a scale 1 salary - to which he laughed. Next I was asked 'what can you contribute to the Spanish apart from the normal lessons'. I explained that I was a trained dancer and had a certificate for teaching dancing and that after school I could start a Spanish club and include some flamenco dancing: 'Olé' was Mr. Pascal's reply. We waited a long time for the committee to come to a decision. I looked at my watch - it was 6.40 p.m. I was going to miss the last train back to Bristol. I told the secretary- in charge of us that as I didn't think that I had a chance of getting the job would she mind if I left. 'Oh don't do that' she said 'they won't be long now'. Ten minutes later I was offered the post. It was very hard for me in the first year, preparing every lesson as thoroughly as possible and teaching three different languages with the Spanish and Latin up to 'A' level. It was very demanding.

I had digs near to the school with one of the teachers, but it didn't work out too well, so that at the end of the first term I decided to live with my mother, who had just moved to London after the death of my father. She was living on the border of Essex which involved a 1½ hour journey each way by bus.

The first problem that I had was with the Spanish. My predecessor, Miss M.C. Roberts, had begun the Spanish and had written a text book which was used in the school. There were very few Spanish text books on the market at that time. This made it difficult for me as she obviously was a kind of icon and I was following in her footsteps. The second problem was that those studying Spanish were the students who were poor at Latin. If at the end of one year of Latin the students showed a tendency for science or if they were considered hopeless at languages they were obliged to join the Spanish class. The insinuation being that Spanish was so easy that it was designed for idiots. What a ridiculous decision seeing that Spanish consists of ⅔ Latin and ⅓ Arabic.

In my first year I had a Spanish assistant, Maria Teresa

Beltrán, whom I shared with the boys' grammar school. She was a great help to me and has remained a life long friend. I'm still in touch with her now and see her whenever I visit Barcelona.

The following year saw the arrival of another assistant from Pontevedra, Galicia, Paco Alén. We began writing Spanish books together, which were published by Methuen. We wrote three altogether. Paco introduced me to his head teacher in Pontevedra and there began an exchange system for Enfield students. The sixth form benefited particularly from this contact. Some went for six weeks as au-pairs to the friends and relations of Paco. Unfortunately Paco died ten years ago, but the family and contacts in this town still form part of the exchanges and work experience that I operate in my present job.

During my second year my husband (also a teacher in further education) and I decided to take a school trip abroad. Nobody else on the staff was doing this. We asked the headmistress, Miss M.C. Sharp, what she thought. She was very supportive, but as we were so young and inexperienced she asked us if we would mind taking one of the secretaries (an older woman) Mrs. Wheal with us in case we had any unforeseen difficulties.

The visit was booked through a school travel agency - there were several at the time. We decided to go to the Bernese Oberland, Switzerland during the Easter Holidays as we knew this area very well. We stayed in a hotel in Wilderswil which was just for school parties. The accommodation and the meals plus the travel arrangements were a disgrace. I don't think that the hotel was making much out of it, but the travel company most certainly was! We obtained weekly season tickets, which covered rail, bus, lake steamers and cable cars, for each member of the group and ordered packed lunches each day and took the group on some lovely excursions including the ski resort of Murren. Everybody seemed to appreciate the visit, but my husband and I vowed that in the future we would book the travel with a friend of ours in the Swiss Tourist Office and then find accommodation in first class hotels at a good rate.

The next year we decided that the visit abroad would be in the winter to Murren for skiing. Once more we explained to Miss Sharp what we intended to do. She was so excited about it as she had spent time in her youth in this particular resort. The next day we returned to her office and spent most of the afternoon there looking at the boots that she had worn for walking and skiing (but a different sort of skiing from the modern time). We booked the travel tickets through the Swiss Tourist Office and double rooms with full pension in the first class hotel Jungfrau for the ten days preceding Christmas. The village was thickly covered in snow, and very few people had arrived. We had the nursery slopes to ourselves and our ski instructor, Hans (John) von Allen, an excellent experienced tutor (whose English was a little faulty) remained our tutor for many more visits to come.

It was not long before we started to take groups to other countries, first to Spain, then to France. There followed a 3 week holiday to Tenerife in the Canary Islands using a South American boat that travelled from Southampton to Venezuela calling at Vigo, Cadiz, Gran Canaria and Tenerife, where we stayed a week, before returning on a similar boat. Visits have been made to Rome, Venice, Milan, the island of Elba, the original Yugoslavia, Greece (including Corfu and Rhodes), Denmark, Portugal, Norway and Austria (summer and skiing). As a result of these numerous visits we were basically working during each holiday. There would be as many as three visits during the summer holidays. No other member of staff seemed interested in organizing trips abroad so we invited some staff members to come along. Some from the P.E. department enjoyed the ski trips and the Latin department came to Rome and Assisi. Each time we booked the travel and hotels independently. The Swiss Tourist Office always gave us free travel tickets and very often the hotels gave us free accommodation. The students paid the basic costs, no profits were added so they all had a very good deal. First class hotels would give us very good rates if we were slightly out of season or if we had three girls to a room instead of two. We always received the same meals as the other guests and we used the same facilities. For my husband and I the trips were very enjoyable, but very hard work and a lot of responsibility. During my 15 years at Enfield County School/Enfield Chase school we organized 139 visits abroad, most of these were reported in the School magazine.

Meanwhile the Spanish department was growing in size. Each year we had a different assistant. Some were very helpful and interesting, others never arrived and some found themselves in trouble and had to return home. One very important assistant was Montserrat Jardi from Barcelona. She was an excellent teacher and we have remained friends to this day. At the end of her year she wanted to stay longer at the school. However an assistant could only spend one year in an English school. As luck would have it Montserrat was a qualified biology teacher and Enfield County was short of a biology teacher. Montserrat's English was very good, so she took over the post of biology teacher for two years, after which time she had to return to Spain

The size of my Spanish classes was beginning to grow. The school was to become comprehensive. New students coming into the school at the age of 13 or 14 had never studied Latin and a few students in the second year opted for Spanish instead of Latin. The results of the 'O' levels were excellent and hence the sixth form group started to increase. One year there were twelve students in my Spanish sixth form. The visiting 'A' level examiner from London University (Westfield College) was Dr. Varey. He gave grade A to each of the students.

Before leaving he asked me why they weren't doing a Spanish degree at University. I explained that their lack of Latin barred them from applying for a language course. He replied 'Next year, have them apply to Westfield and I will supply them with a basic Latin course to cover this ruling'. Shortly after, due to the change to the Comprehensive system this requirement was dropped, so that there was no problem.

Throughout my time at Enfield County I was a member of the A.T.S.P., the Association of teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. They became part of the M.L.A. (Modern Language Association), who held a Speech contest every year in London. I entered students for the individual sections and a senior group in the Drama section. Each team had to produce a scene of 20-30 minutes from any work that they chose. I nearly always presented a scene from a Lorca play. The competition was fierce as it always included such schools as the North London Collegiate, Haberdasher Askes, Wallington High School, Warwick Public School, Eton, Southwark Convent etc.

Every year Enfield won something and frequently it was the first prize for drama (books and certificates). The results were nearly always printed in the School Magazine or announced in assembly.

The first time that we won the Drama I decided to put on a fiesta - an evening of Spanish singing and flamenco dancing delivered by professional musicians and dancers whom I knew, living nearby in Palmers Green. They were Valeriano and Maria who organized the group. The drama scene that had been performed in the contest was included. Other fiestas followed and were very popular and well attended, but rarely, if ever, attended by any member of staff from the language department. It seemed that Spanish was still considered the Cinderella of the department. Another assistant who came to Enfield County also contributed to these fiestas. He was an excellent teacher and guitarist. His name was Salvador Ortiz-Carboneres. We also wrote two books together, one of which is still on the market. Salvador spent his one year at Enfield and then went on to York University for a year, when he was appointed as a lecturer at the new Warwick University.

A year after he left Enfield School in 1972 and at the end of my fifteenth and last year at Enfield we had a fiesta as usual in July. Salvador returned to play and sing, the drama team performed and so did two professional singers, who should go down in the history of Enfield School. Their names were Dorita and Pepe. They were very popular on the radio and then on television in the 50's, 60's and 70's. They made thousands of records and sang mostly South American songs in Spanish. Pepe was Argentinean and played the guitar and sang, whilst Dorita had a most powerful

operatic voice. I remember we had a lot of their records at home. One day I read that Dorita was in fact English and born in North London. I investigated further only to find that she lived in Enfield and had been a pupil at Enfield School. I found an address in 'Who's Who' and explained that I taught Spanish at Enfield and would she consider giving a concert at the school. I expected the answer to be negative or a demand for a very large fee. Instead I received a delightful letter saying that it would be very exciting to come and that they would not require any fee. The night of the concert arrived and Pepe and Dorita sang their hearts out - no microphone was needed as Dorita could be heard for miles around.

The next term I moved to Minchenden School in Southgate. Two teachers, both teaching partly French and partly Spanish decided to marry and leave London. Their post was advertised as a grade 4 in charge of Spanish. They persuaded me to apply for this job, which I got, but looking back it was a mistake. I wish that I had stayed at Enfield County (Chace).

There are two past students whom I see at the moment - one is Kay Krockel who was very much part of the ski trips we took and the other is Stephanie Fitt who contacted me last year and attends an adult Spanish class that I run.



## Jean Cleare (Buchanan)

After four years in an idyllic two form entry rural grammar school, I was transferred to the impressive town school that I think my mother [Connie Parish 1908-2000] and her elder sister [Freda] had attended in the 1920's, an almost three mile hilly cycle ride from our new home in Palmers Green. It was quite a shock.

I had been in the top three of the smaller school, so it was a challenging experience to be put in the lowest 5<sup>th</sup> year group, and I struggled to adjust to the different syllabi and standards of work, and ways of thinking! I remember Janet Oates was very kind and she, along with a few others, included me in their circle.

After 'O' levels I joined the upper 6<sup>th</sup> where I was very happy, and enjoyed the 4 subjects that I studied, having strong memories of Botanical microscope work, fascinating Zoological dissection, everything needing to be recorded by careful observational drawing. Then there was the regular work in the Art department, and the ever expanding world horizons which we discovered in Geography.

I had forgotten, until I found your website recently, that I had been a prefect in my last year.

Characters – Mrs Steve Wooldridge stood out as being very unconventional. Did she bring her dog to class?

I think I never felt I really belonged – but I was very grateful for the excellent education I received. Since those sun filled days, I have been very aware of people who are 'not quite one of us'. Indeed this may have been the greatest gift I received from my three years at Enfield County, that and the opportunity to go on to university.

## Jennifer Caddy 1961-68

Life at ECS was never dull. The girls, the teachers and the sports made it memorable.

My first impression was of the size of the place. Compared with my primary school — two classrooms, two teachers, thirty pupils - it was huge. There were thirty in my class and 120 in my year. PE was part of the curriculum. I was introduced to team games and athletics (and, another new experience, competition). Running was easier for me than thinking, so I joined in enthusiastically.

The school dinners, cooked on the premises, were better than those of my primary school where lumpy gravy, gristly meat and soggy cabbage were the norm. The choice was eat or starve. Custard was now liquid, mashed potato was white not grey and chips, served weekly, a treat.

Playing rounders in the playground, now a car park, I once hit a tennis ball through an open window of the kitchen. The ball hit a cook in the eye before landing in a tray of food.

We discovered that nitric acid poured over the bronze games' badges made them shine (after much fizzing), and that the bannisters at the far end of the New Building provided a good surface to slide down~an activity not for the faint-hearted.

One day in assembly a light cover fell from the ceiling and hit the floor with a loud crash. We jumped but carried on as if nothing had happened.

Miss I K Hogg became headmistress in my second year. She drove a Triumph Herald with an IAM badge attached to the radiator grille. The badge impressed me, once I had discovered its significance, and twenty years later I followed her example and became a member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

I enjoyed my time at ECS. Forty years on I still have my school fountain pen, pencil case and geometry set, and I refer occasionally to two surviving texts--my domestic science notebook and a booklist I copied in the sixth form onto two sheets of now yellow and torn foolscap paper

## Gina K Lane 1963-69

### 1967: the year we "went comprehensive"

I am by several years the youngest of a very political family. In 1963, I, aged 10 and wearying of speculation about the fall of the Conservative government, announced that I was bored because politics didn't affect me. My older siblings were quick to point out that a Labour government would radically change education. I tossed my head. But they were right. Harold Wilson scraped into government in 1964, and everything was different.

The first thing that happened was that, mysteriously, I didn't seem ever to take the eleven plus. After multiple practices, the fateful day didn't come. Instead, I, and one other from my primary school, received a letter saying we'd got into Enfield County on the basis of the head teacher's recommendation.

The second change was that Middlesex disappeared and the Municipal Borough of Southgate, where I lived,



became part of the London Borough of Enfield. My parents – green pioneers – complained because Enfield didn't collect newspapers for recycling, but at least I got a free travel pass. So off I duly set, by tube and bus, for my first day at ECS.

But the biggest change came when I was about to start the Fourth form (year 10 as it now is). The disappearance of the eleven plus turned out to be a forerunner to the start of comprehensive education. Enfield County married Chace Girls' and became Enfield Chace School.

In reality, my year made little of the change, selfish teenagers as we then were. We didn't have to move, and the staff who stayed on made every effort to ensure our education continued as before. The change, with the two buildings becoming the lower and upper schools, was not completed for several years, although the sixth forms merged almost immediately, and the first form intake from 1967 all started at Rosemary Avenue. We only vaguely noted the gradual disappearance of younger pupils at Holly Walk. The end of the previous year saw a number of departures of old faces, and there were rumours that these teachers were leaving because they didn't want to work in the comprehensive. But to be honest – and it shames me now to remember – we didn't really think about how either the staff, or the girls who were uprooted, must have felt.

Yet for the staff, the signs were there if we had cared to consider them. I remember Miss Cox, then Head of English, apologising to us in the sixth form because we were being taught by only (only!) two English teachers at A level. She had wanted to get another A level teacher but had had to take on an extra remedial teacher instead. With hindsight, I see this must have been a wholly new area for her. Similarly, in an honest attempt to spread the teachers about and widen their experience, a young teacher from the secondary modern taught my class, the most academic stream, for history in that first year of comprehensive education. At the end of that year almost the entire class "failed" the end of year exams. The following week we found we were being taught by the memorable Mrs Martin, Head of history. We thrived, and all got excellent O level grades the following year. But I now realise how devastating it must have been for that other teacher.

As for mixing with the girls who came from Rosemary Avenue, I'm forced to admit that we just didn't. It wasn't until the sixth form that we shared classes, and even then I am not sure how much we talked to each other. I can only imagine what it was like to leave your familiar surroundings and have to come into what had until then been a very traditional girls' grammar school, with different rules and different expectations. I know that in the years that followed, several staff left; and after seven years, there would have been no cohort left from the pre-comprehensive days. It was probably even longer before the school became a "real" comprehensive.

## Miss I K Hogg Headmistress 1962-74

**21st July, 1967 - the last day in the life of E.C.S. after fifty-eight years.**

**7th September, 1967 - the first day in the life of E.C.G.S.**

There is no such thing as Comprehensive Education. Education is that natural process which, whatever name it is given, will continue unchecked. Goodwill, tolerance and a right attitude of mind - all these will create the necessary atmosphere which allows each individual to develop her own personality whilst simultaneously learning to live as a full member of society, with responsibilities to, and consideration for, other members of that society.

In our unhappy lust for speed, Time, that most precious of commodities, is in very short supply. In fact, there is no more time left for 'saying'; we must begin 'doing', clinging courageously to that part of our tradition which is appropriate to our 'new look', and equally courageously dispensing with those facets which are no longer pertinent.

As far as is humanly possible, we shall continue in September with the minimum of disturbance to the school career of all the girls, who are, though this has sometimes been overlooked, the main concern of all of us who have our profession in its true perspective.

I referred to this old German prayer at the end of one of my Speech Day Reports ; may I quote it again:

'God grant us the serenity  
To accept the things we cannot change,  
The courage to change the things we can,  
And the wisdom to know the difference.'

## Annette Guttridge (Storrs-Elsey) 1967-78:1979-83)

As a young teacher I was appointed to succeed Miss Thurston in the R.S. department under Miss Campbell. I was allowed to teach some history and, in my first year only, I found myself teaching English to my own Form – IS. Fortunately that was only for 12 months, Mrs Martin then took the English period for history, which I much enjoyed. In 1974 I was appointed Head of R.S., but still taught history as well.

Various memories stand out: the difficulties of commuting, initially by bus, with bagloads of books to carry; Wednesday and Thursday (1967-8) when IH and IT came to Holly Walk for the 2 days, while 4L and 4P returned to Rosemary Avenue. As a result, few girls had all the right books at the right time! After that only staff commuted. Writing reports (in rough) for Mrs Hart to check was intimidating; but the prospect of having to explain to her just why she had to resign a whole set (I had spilt a bottle of ink over the set while writing up the form mistress comments!) was awful. Her kindness and understanding on that occasion were very much appreciated. I remember the bell Miss Purnell rang at the end of break and lunch hour in the Rosemary Avenue staff room-till it vanished mysteriously one day, much to her chagrin. (Now who was responsible for that??)

Miss Pagan's arrival in January 1975 shook up the whole school staff. Some of the really naughty girls had quite a shock when they found themselves actually doing what they were told! Staff too, had to look to their laurels. Barbara Pagan was a much respected H.M.

The girls or course, were at the heart of the matter. This was my second teaching post; I spent my first year in a slum school in Nottingham. Girls had their problems, but they were different. For my part, I found discipline very easy as everyone did what they were told, but essentially the teaching is the same wherever one is. What matters is the pupils. To me the teenage years are fascinating. Girls enter the school as children, and most emerge several years later as young women with varied aims and ambitions, but ready to make their way in the world and achieve their potential. ECS does its job well.

P.S. My sisters-in-law, Ena Wisser (1939→) & Scholarship girl Lynette Guttridge (1944→) and my two nieces: Annette Guttridge (1963-71) & Justine Guttridge (1967-73) were all pupils at ECS.

### **Kim Frazer (Staples) 1971-1978**

It is with mixed emotions that I put pen to paper to make this contribution to the ECSOGA Centenary. I feel so disappointed that after all these years the association is coming to an end and yet it is precisely because people like me have admired from afar and supported in thought and not in deed that the situation has resulted in this unfortunate ending.

Life is full of "if onlys..." and this is yet another to add to my list. If only I had supported in the way I had intended when I was young, "in my salad days and green in judgement". (Mr Scholar would be so proud of me quoting one of my A level texts from of old!!)

My memories of Enfield County Girls' School, as it was called when I joined in September 1971 are many and varied. Time and space will not permit the airing of them all and maybe I need to sit down quietly and produce a companion to sit alongside Mrs Hart's.

Back in 1971 my parents visited local secondary schools while I stayed at home with my nanny. Unlike today, the choice was made in my absence and I did not have a say as to which school I would prefer to go to. I can remember thinking it would be very odd to have a school full of girls!

In the early 70's Enfield County Girls' School was over subscribed and so only 5 girls from non-linked Primary schools were admitted to the school. So, I was very fortunate to get a place.....or so I was informed.

September arrived and I, together with many other anxious young 11 year olds, made my way in my itchy tweed skirt to the school hall in Rosemary Avenue. What a big hall and what a lot of people and what unfamiliarity. I was so scared.

We were then put into different classes according to the letter of our surname and told these would be temporary arrangements until the results of our forthcoming tests. What a welcome! We were to have two days of testing in Maths and English to assess our abilities and graded accordingly.

As I sit and reflect I realize there is a volume or two's worth of memories locked in some section of my mind.

Different thoughts keep sweeping past like.....

..... the fact that a teacher left to have a baby and called her Rosemary-Holly after the two schools..... where did that memory come from?

..... that Mrs Hooper used to sit on the stage in assembly with her index finger resting on her lips and thumb under her chin.....

..... that Miss James used to have such orange hair and way-out clothes but her English lessons were such fun!.....

..... that Mrs Hills had a grand-daughter who thought you called it an Easter - deg along with frie - degs, boil - degs and scrabble - degs!....

..... that I longed to be in the netball team and win my colours.....and I did!

..... that my Dad said, "one day you will be head girl Kim".....and I was!

..... that Miss B. Hill said, "you won't get to be a teacher there are not enough jobs..... and I am!

Thank-you old school....I am sorry I took too long to say!

## Maria Walker (Constantinou 1978-84)

### Dance Festival

One of my most memorable and fun experiences that I can recall from Enfield County, was back in around 1979-80. It was when I was in the lower school building and Mrs. Clapham was our headmistress.

We had a wonderful enthusiastic dance teacher Miss Nelson. Back then performing arts seemed to have been more encouraged, and it was always a lesson that seemed to excite all the pupils. We used to dance in the large assembly hall and I hold very fond memories of all the different styles we learnt. Believe it or not, I can still remember the Charleston steps we were taught, so enthusiastically by Miss Nelson!

It was decided that we would organise a dance festival, that would be a celebration of all different cultures and eras, and any pupil could participate. It would be full of colour and energy, and it was to be performed in front of all the staff, parents, and pupils. The art department provided the most magnificent wall decorations. I recall a huge, 5ft-6ft Buddha occupying one entire wall to the left of the stage, making it come to life beautifully. I also remember plants being hired to enhance the exotic feel. They were expertly positioned, mainly in front of the Buddha, in all different shades of green. There were even some beautiful tropical plants and flowers which all added to this magical atmosphere.

All the participating girls, practiced vigorously for weeks on end beforehand. Even the needlework department and parents worked hard on making beautiful costumes, and as the day drew closer, the whole school seemed to be buzzing with excitement. I was involved in the Greek dancing, and we hired the traditional, village peasant girl outfit and I remember being nominated by Miss Nelson, to take charge of the hair-pieces. Traditionally it would have been a plain scarf, which would have covered our hair, and wasn't particularly exciting. Naturally, the other girls were not too keen on this idea! So I gently persuaded Miss. Nelson to lend us some funds for silk red carnations, which I bought from a stall in the market. We left out the scarves and instead made a headpiece that was much more flattering.

There was a variety of different dances, African, Charleston with amazing feather headpieces and, at the end for the finale, all the girls on stage doing some kind of Rock and Roll twist. It was absolutely breath taking! All the different coloured costumes came together to provide a magnificent visual array, and splash of colour.

I remember some pretty cheeky girls doing a lot of whispering behind the scenes, and all was revealed in the grand finale. They happened to be right at the front of the stage, and as they were whirling and twisting round, both their skirts dropped to the ground! They acted surprised and calmly, coolly stepped over their garments, picked them up and started swirling them round and round their heads, before flinging them into the surprised audience, and carried on dancing! There was

tremendous cheering, clapping and laughter from the audience. They didn't get into any trouble, as they had thought to cover their modestly with black shorts! Their boyfriends happened to be in the audience, and they had decided to give them a little thrill. You've got to laugh! If only you could have seen the look on poor Miss Nelsons face! She was utterly mortified. Her mouth dropped open and she looked completely shell shocked. As for Mrs Clapham, I could see her anxiously looking round at the various committee members and staff to see their reactions. There was also some sort of distinguished guest that had been sitting next to her, but everyone was having such a fantastic time cheering and laughing, that, on seeing that no one was offended, she shrugged her shoulders and joined in the merriment.



## Jeanne Pimentel (Duval) 1946-51

### LIFE AFTER ECS

More by accident than design, I have been blessed with a varied and interesting life since leaving school in 1951,

As a child I had always felt the call of faraway places. Long before I left school, my best friend Ann Teare and I resolved to go to Australia as soon as we were 21. And we did! After five years of working in London at secretarial jobs, we took advantage of the immigration scheme that paid our passage out. The idea was to use Australia as a jumping-off place to see the world: we only intended to stay the required two years, and then to travel back through Asia, India, and Africa. Then, after touching base with our families in England, we would get jobs in our beloved Paris.

And indeed Ann kept to the plan, along with another (non-ECS) friend who followed us to Australia. But early in our stay I had met an American in the film studio where I had found a temporary job, and he enticed me into marrying him and traveling around Australia together to make our own documentary film.

The film connection came about because I had worked at the BBC ever since leaving school at age 15. My widowed mother could not possibly support me to stay on and take A levels, in spite of M.C. Sharp's pleas. Not that I cared then; I was happy to be out in the big world with most of my friends. The theatre was my passion, nurtured of course by our celebrated teachers, Miss Flint and Miss Cox, and the BBC was the closest I could come to that milieu. At first I had to work in a boring typing pool, but I followed my Thespian dream in my spare time with the BBC employees' drama club and the Tavistock Repertory Company in Islington. After three years I actually got a BBC job that took me into the studio, as a junior production secretary on "In Town Tonight" a variety show that for a few years was a "simulcast" on radio and television. I spent most of my waking hours in

London and often only went home to Enfield to sleep.

So why would I leave such a life for the wilds of Australia? Another part of me retained the Frank and I finished shooting the Australian film on a shoestring, and took jobs in Sydney in editing studios where we could complete post-production, then we were ready to leave. America was the last place on my travel list – I held it almost in contempt – but I agreed to go to California to visit Frank's ailing mother in Berkeley before continuing to Europe. It turned out to be the last year of her life, and somehow we never got away. We both worked in movie production, had two children, and a rich and exciting life. But after moving from the San Francisco Bay Area to Los Angeles, our somewhat tempestuous marriage finally broke up. I planned to leave LA, which I never liked, to return either to San Francisco or to Europe. When I met George Pimentel, a professor at the University of California in Berkeley, it was love at first sight and the choice was easy.

In an equally exciting and far more harmonious relationship of almost twenty years, I came to know and relish the very different world of academia and the scientific community. George was a chemist—and much more. He was known as much for his zest for life as for his outstanding research achievements and his dedication to teaching. We enjoyed combining our families – he had three daughters – and our diverse friends and interests. We were known for our lively informal parties, both in Berkeley and in Washington DC, where we lived for three years during his appointment as Deputy Director of the National Science Foundation in the Carter administration. Perhaps it was just too good to last. In 1989, the Berlin wall came down, a huge earthquake shook San Francisco, and my beloved George died of cancer at the height of his career. But he left me his wonderful world as a legacy, and I have been rich in respect, friendship, opportunity, and financial security ever since.

With George I had traveled the world and made lasting friendships. I saw more places in Europe

than when I lived there. On one visit to London I felt like Cinderella as we flew first class, invited by the Royal Society of Chemistry, as guests of honor on the publication of his internationally acclaimed report on chemistry, and I found myself literally dining at the Ritz!

About that time I gave up working in film production and, with George's support, finally achieved an ambition that had grown gradually through the years—to go to college! I'm now a proud alumna of the University of California at Berkeley, with a BA in English, and a minor in French. Since then I've worked as a copyeditor, forsaking pictures to concentrate on words, though more recently I've spent a lot of time volunteering with non-profits, notably a local organization that helps underprivileged youth, and the local chapter of the United Nations Association. Oh yes, I achieved another dream in 1993, when I took six months out to live in Paris, where I worked as a volunteer at UNESCO.

More and more now, the family takes much of my time, and it's gladly given. I'm fortunate to have most of our combined multi-generational family within driving distance of Berkeley. So I savor the pleasures I denied to my poor mother, whom I saw only a few times since leaving home.

However, since George's death I've become drawn back to England, partly by a desire to share my heritage with my American children and grandchildren, and in 2003 I bought a small house in a tiny village in Kent where an old friend lived, and for three years I brought various family members there to experience the joys of my native culture. Right now I can't afford to run two homes, but neither can I break the family ties in California. So the house in Kent is rented out, but I have many relatives and friends in England to stay with on frequent visits, and the warm feeling that I own a plot of English soil.

Yes, it's been a wonderful life so far, partly perhaps because I'm lucky enough to have the temperament to make the most of whatever comes my way. I even loved school! And remaking

connections during the last few years has been an experience as rich as vintage wine. Thank you, ECSOGA for making that happen, I'm sorry the organization is dissolving, but I believe the spirit will live on and engender other gatherings. During my school years I loved Girl Guides too, and one of the camp songs I remember seems relevant:

Each campfire burns anew  
The flame of friendship true  
The joy we've had in knowing you  
Will last our whole lives through.



Mrs Joan Hart

It would be impossible to omit mentioning Joan Hart in the Celebration of ECS's Centenary.

Joan Cherry joined ECS in January 1947 as a member of the French department. She later married Denys Hart and became one of the first members staff to be allowed to stay on after marriage, in spite of opposition from Miss F Sharp.

Joan eventually became Deputy Head in the final year of ECS as a Grammar School and survived the changeover to ECS as a Comprehensive School, until she took early retirement.

Not only the school's historian, (as the author of *Onward Ever*, covering the history of the school from 1909-1967), Joan has also supported and participated in many of the activities of ECSOGA and is currently our Vice President. Numerous Old Girls correspond with her and she is a constant help and source of reference to any former member of ECS, who consults her. The Committee, past and present, give Joan our warmest thanks for all her help and guidance over the years.

Editor





**Miss Irene Byard Headmistress  
1986-2005**

### **From Chace to County - A Twenty Year Saga**

The twenty years from 1986 coincided with some of the most far reaching changes to the education system since the end of World War II. Industrial Action, School Development Planning, Teacher Training Days, the introduction of G.C.S.E. examinations, Annual Meetings with Parents and Governors, the National Curriculum S.A.T.S. and OFSTED inspections were just a few of the issues which had to be tackled. The rapid pace of change accelerated over the next twenty years and the school had to respond to the multiplicity of initiatives and the ever encroaching dictates of central government. It was of paramount importance for the success of the students and the school that the initiatives were managed effectively or circumvented by an increasingly confident and dedicated staff. That they were successful was evidenced in 1999 when 81% of the students gained 5 or more A-C passes at G.C.S.E. making Enfield County the most improved school in London and in the top 10 for the country. The subsequent visit to Downing Street, by Ms Rutherford and me, was an acknowledgement of all that had been achieved.

Underpinning everything was an effective and proactive leadership team partnered by a highly skilled and motivated staff and supported for over twenty years by an outstanding Chairman of Governors, Miss Phyllis Oborn M.B.E., and a hardworking Governing Body. This formidable combination was able to take on the responsibility of managing the school's finances and buildings from the early 1990's and to channel resources to meet the needs of the students and school. No longer would the L.E.A. control the purse strings. Instead the school could direct resources to raising standards and putting the teaching and learning of students at the centre of the school's work.

It was not so easy to deal with the poor, inadequate accommodation. Delivering 21<sup>st</sup> century quality education in buildings dating from 1909 -1954 was a challenge especially as a high proportion of the teaching space was in temporary accommodation, including the gym at Holly Walk. Some refurbishment of the food and textiles rooms had taken place in 1988-9 following an infestation, but, apart from decorating the school, few inroads were made into the problem. The battle to secure a new gym, music room and a drama studio was hard fought with Miss Oborn and I going directly to see the Minister of State to appeal for funding. Closing the gym and getting it condemned, with an OFSTED Inspection imminent, was a gamble but one which paid off and, in 1995, the new gym at Holly Walk was opened. The refurbishment of the Lower School Library, upgrading of Laboratories and practical areas, the provision of new Art and Technology facilities at Rosemary Avenue and the post 16 Building at Holly Walk went some way to providing the accommodation needed to deliver quality education. The injection of capital via the Language College has also helped but until the issues of the Lower School site and aspects of the Holly Walk site are addressed with serious money, then the school will always be looking to adapt and tinker existing facilities to meet curriculum needs.

Many of the problems, which bedevilled the period 1986 to 2005, had little or nothing to do with education. The murder of a year 7 student and the devastating impact on the school had to be managed and endured. The Poll Tax meant that young teachers could not afford to live in the area and the loss of 18 members of staff in 1989 was disturbing. Economic downturn meant belt tightening and the loss of staff while increased prosperity meant staff recruitment was difficult as opportunities were available elsewhere. On the plus side the day the fire brigade arrived at the Holy Walk site to put out a fire at Chace School and candidates for the Deputy Headship of the same school arrived at Holly Walk precipitated a review

of the school's name. Enfield Chace returned to Enfield County!

Headship is challenging at any time and especially when the Head is new and comes with different ideas and priorities. While some staff saw this as an opportunity to change practices for the better, others perceived the Head as a threat to tradition and their established, settled existence. That the school had to change in the face of Government initiatives was self evident and it almost became an art form to carry the doubters and involve them at all levels. There were some difficult times but the school that emerged from the challenges was stronger, responsive, more child centered, successful and forward looking. It was capable of facing anything the Government could throw at it and adapting it for the good of the students and staff.

One thing never failed to delight me and that was the commitment of staff at all levels to provide opportunities and activities to enhance the quality of student experience. Whether it was the staff panto, where I once had the starring role as the evil Head in 'Snow White and the Seven Rejects', educational visits, sporting activities, music and drama productions, workshops, 'Red Nose Day', lunch time drop in sessions or World Challenge, the staff gave of their best. That the students thrived in such an environment appeared in every OFSTED Report. It would be remiss not to mention the students for they are at the heart of the education process. Nothing gave me more pleasure than to see them succeed and develop into young women. In the main they were fun to be with, responsive, showed initiative and hardworking. Regrettably there was always a minority who failed to respond to the opportunities on offer but, for the majority, the school provided a purposeful, stimulating and caring environment in which they flourished.

My Headship was unique in many ways. I was privileged to have the same Chairman of Governors, Miss Phyllis Oborn, for twenty years. She was a tower of strength. One of my Deputies, Maggie Lee, was already at the school when I arrived and Pam Rutherford became my other Deputy in 1989. I was exceedingly fortunate to have women of such high calibre and warmth in my team and I owe so much to both of them. I started out as Headmistress of Enfield Chace, a split site girls' comprehensive school which was 'jogging along nicely'. I ended as Headmistress of Enfield County, a split site girls' Language College, which OFSTED labelled 'outstanding' early in 2006. A fitting epitaph for someone who left school determined never to teach and if there were no other options never to return to a girls' school!!



**Ms Pamela Rutherford**  
**Joined ECS September 1979**  
**Headteacher from January 2006**

## **2006-2009**

2006 saw a new phase in the history of the school with Enfield County going 'global'. The school's newly recognised status as a Specialist Language College put Enfield County firmly on the world stage. The mission statement of the school was re-drafted to reflect this and now reads 'girls today, our women tomorrow. Preparing all for life and work in a global community'. The study of two modern foreign languages at key stage 3 was compulsory with everyone studying at least one for GCSE. This formalised the importance of the study of languages at Enfield County making it still very much part of the school experience as we moved further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Language College status enabled us to focus on the international dimension and celebrate our school as a vibrant multi-ethnic community with girls from over 48 identified ethnic groups and over 25% of our girls able to speak an additional language at a very high level. At the last count the school community could speak 34 languages other than English. As time has gone on the teaching of languages has expanded. We now offer taught French, Spanish and Italian with additional sessions being offered in Latin, Japanese and British Sign Language. Our aim was that every girl was to become immersed in another culture at some stage in her school career. Every month a new language was shared with the school community, assemblies were given and labels put around the school. The Headteacher's office has been therefore been called Директриса школы (Russian), Διευθύντρια (Greek), Dyrektorka (Polish), Olori ile eko lobinrin (Yoruba) and: Pri-fathrawes (Welsh) amongst other things. Whole year groups were given the opportunity to embark on a foreign visit and as time went on the number of visits and exchanges increased and became more ambitious. Our girls and their teachers were able to travel to France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Poland, Brazil, Belize, Guatemala, Tanzania, Gambia, Jamaica and Japan to name but a few of their many destinations.

Charity work, always important to the school community, also took on an international dimension. As well as supporting numerous charities at home the girls have painted a school in Guatemala and built a nursery school in Gambia with our girls doing the actual painting and building as part of World Challenge and Duke of Edinburgh. International partnerships have also been forged with schools in Jamaica, Turkey and Germany. As far as the opportunities for enrichment and personal development go there has never a better time to be a student at ECS.

2006 also saw a return of the dreaded Ofsted inspectors and this time they validated what we already knew – Enfield County is an outstanding school. Ofsted praised our high standards and achievement stating that these were a reflection of the well-established ethos of care and creativity that pervaded the school. Since then we have continued to develop and flourish with a concerted effort to improve the buildings and facilities and to develop the curriculum to provide the best possible learning experiences.

As we go into the year of our centenary the girls are already deciding what they can do to mark the occasion further. Plans include further development of the quad garden at Rosemary Avenue and the grounds at Holly Walk. In fact a group of girls entered a local competition and won £800 towards their plans for sustainable development of the upper school site. Part of the focus was a floral display in front of the old building to mark the occasion of its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday

2009 also marks the 30<sup>th</sup> year that I have been employed at the school. I now find myself teaching the daughters of the girls I taught in the 1980's – where has the time gone! As I go about my daily routine the past often comes up and touches me on the shoulder. It could be news of the success of a previous student, seeing a parent who was once a member of my form or even signing the order to replace the chrysanthemum curtains of the lower school hall that seemed to have been there for ever. It doesn't seem like 30 years since I first walked through the doors of Enfield County School but I remember it as yesterday. Surprised that the girls wore kilts, I have never seen that before and impressed by the atmosphere and feel of the school I was quickly convinced that this was where I wanted to work – am I still convinced as I guide Enfield County into the next phase of its history? Absolutely! Just seeing our students develop from 'girls today to our women tomorrow' convinces me that Enfield County has not only delivered quality education for the past 100 years but is set to do so for the years to come.



## Harriett Nailon (Lott) 1956-63

A few closing reflections from the last  
Chairman of ECSOGA

### **THE PAST CENTURY – and the one just beginning**

**Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis**

Times change, and we change with them  
Quoted in Harrison's *Description of Britain*  
1577

My parents were terrible at time-keeping. Hours of my childhood were spent waiting for Mummy to be ready to go out, or for Dad to arrive. Among the many things that I loved about Enfield County School were the order imposed by the timetable, the punctuality of the bells and the measuring-out of the day into neat slots with clearly defined activities for each one. Despite his casual approach to time in everyday living, my father was accurate to the point of pedantry in locating his many, and oft-repeated, reminiscences in exactly the correct year. I was aware from an early age that my father was born in 1908 "six years before the start of the First World War".

On my first day at ECS, in September 1956, walking through the wrought iron gate on Holly Walk, I immediately noticed the date on the corner of the imposing building to my left: 1908. It seemed to be an auspicious omen and gave me an immediate affection for my new school. By the third form I found I had inherited Dad's interest in dates, with History emerging as one of my three 'best' subjects, and the only one in which my performance showed any consistency. After ECS I studied for and worked in an industry where the most profitable, but also the most perishable, item of merchandise is space multiplied by time. Such success as I enjoyed in the various jobs, which made up my rather chaotic career, was largely due to work-scheduling skills and an ability to meet deadlines. Marrying a man who is wonderful in many, many ways but not one of life's foremost time-managers has meant that my time-awareness switch is in the 'ON' position every waking hour of every day.

In short, I am by nature, nurture and experience a person who is very, time conscious both in the here and-now and through my interest in the long-sweep of history, especially recent modern history. Milestones in time mean a great deal and so it is important and exciting for me that ECSOGA will soon be marking the centenary of the official opening of our dearly loved Enfield County School. (I trust the use of the plural possessive is not unduly presumptuous.) Along with many others I can remember the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events held in 1959. It seems amazing that it is now half a century since I was in Form IIIA. Our Form Mistress was Miss Healey, a delightful young Canadian graduate of London University, who had taught us History in the second year. As the academic year 1958/59 progressed, plans were announced for the Golden Jubilee celebrations in September 1959. Our Form Room was designated for the History Department Display. The last days of Summer Term, when all the exams were completed, were filled with frantic activity as Form IIIA put the finishing touches to models, posters and work-books related to the Tudor period and made space for items reflecting study of other centuries delivered by proudly breathless members of forms older and younger than us.

I remember thinking that to some of my peers the founding of the school, 50 years before, seemed almost as distant as Tudor times, whereas, for me, the Edwardian period was not that long ago and, in some ways, quite familiar. This was partly because my father was a little older than most of the parents of IIIA but mainly because my paternal grandparents, whom we visited most week-ends, sometimes twice, were still essentially Edwardians or, in some matters, still Victorians.

In reflective moments, I look back and wonder what my grandparents and Miss Broome, who was slightly older, would make of life today. They would, no doubt, be amazed at the wonders of computers, the internet, mass air travel and everything else which, it is probably fair to say, are completely taken for granted by students currently at ECS. However, I do not think that the generations who could recall the reign of Queen Victoria would be totally surprised by the technical wonders available to us today. They were used to innovations and had respect, if not always a liking, for material advances. Nowadays we have Bill Gates, Tim Berners-Lee and Richard Branson to admire – Miss Broome and her-



## Harriett Nailon (Lott) contd.

staff and pupils had Edison, Marconi, Alexander Graham Bell and Henry Ford.

At other times I find myself looking forward and wondering whether ECS will still be in existence as a school in 2109. If so, it will certainly be largely unrecognisable to those who are students today, let alone to those of us aged over 50. If the 21<sup>st</sup> century alumni decide to mark the bi-centenary of the school's opening with an item equivalent to this booklet, they will surely use some form of technology unknown to us now – and possibly beyond our wildest imaginings. So, albeit very tentatively, I do feel able to imagine how early 20<sup>th</sup> century people might view the early 21<sup>st</sup> because, after all, I did know some people who were adults 100 years ago. Looking to the future, and trying to imagine 2109, is another matter entirely. I find that trying to picture what multi-ethnic, multi-faith, possibly multi-cultural Britain (or maybe we should say England?) will be like in 100 years time is just impossible.

There are too many factors to consider: the pace of change, the influence of globalisation, the impact of climate change (whether or not mainly man-made) and the effects of other natural phenomena. Possibly the people of 2109 will not be very interested in their heritage or the history of their organisations and institutions? Maybe everyone will consider themselves to be a citizen of the world, not too concerned about local or national identity and their ancestry? We have genetically modified crops now: might there be genetically modified humans 100 years hence? Or perhaps England will be divided up into different regions, part of the Greater Euroasian Union which will be made up of  $(27 + x)$  onetime countries, still with its headquarters in Brussels from where the 276 different regions are administered by linked super-computers? Or maybe Britain will be the economic vassal of a Chinese or Indian super-power? Or maybe the world-wide Caliphate will have been established? One hundred years from now maybe some of the indigenous families will look back to wonder when England started to slip away and will wistfully regard the years from 1909 – 2009 as the long-drawn out swan song of a once-great nation state? But all of this is mere conjecture: if any of it ever happens it will far away in the future.

For now, the purpose of this publication is to recall and celebrate the century from 1909 to 2009. If, at some future date, the information and views contained here prove to be useful pointers or prescient forecasts, then that will be a bonus. Reading through the lively and thoughtful contributions from ECSOGA Members; the great variety of ideas, memories and feelings expressed will, I hope, entertain and stimulated all readers.

The period 1901 – 2000 has, been described as “a mean century”, I suspect by someone on the political left who knew little and cared less about the fruits of capitalism. I object to anyone so describing the century in which I have lived most of my life. Yes, it was a very violent and difficult century but so too were most of the previous ones, but the 20<sup>th</sup> century was also marvellous, in the real sense of that word. For the people of Britain the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was heroic – as the wartime accounts of ECSOGA Members have shown here, and in our earlier publications. The second half of the century can probably be accurately described as more hedonistic than heroic but it has been, for most of us, a time of prosperity and peace. Whether hardship and the camaraderie of shared danger make for more happiness than full employment and consumer choice is a moot point and one that continues to baffle sociologists, psychologists and journalists. A few years ago a contemporary historian observed that possibly the best time to be alive is just before the end of an Empire: the work and sacrifices to create the Empire are over but the fruits are still available and the consequences of decay have yet to be felt. Not everyone to whom I have repeated this assertion finds it convincing: I leave it with you, dear readers, to ponder. Maybe some of the malaise apparent in our country in the last few years is because the decomposition of the long-enjoyed fruit of the British Empire is reaching a critical point?

To get to my point: despite everything negative that can be said about the 20<sup>th</sup> century (most of which, for Britain applies to the period before 1945) for the average woman in the western world can there be any serious doubt that the second half of the century has been the best time to be alive in the whole of recorded history? The writings in this booklet confirm for me the truth of this idea. Also they underline the fact that for some 20<sup>th</sup> century women, my-



self included, the reason that we were able to take advantage of this wonderful time comes down to one simple fact: we went to a very good school. Everything else flowed from our sound, rigorous and enjoyable secondary education. I, and many like me, grasp every opportunity to express our gratitude to Enfield County School and take particular pleasure in doing so in the School's 100<sup>th</sup> year. Thank you, ECS!

**ECSOGA's objective has been to give space to a few Members, on behalf of the many, to pay tribute to Enfield County School.** At the same time we hope to help our classmates recall their schooldays. In addition (to paraphrase from *Henry IV, Part I* - the O level text studied by so many in the 1950s and 60s) we would like to think that we may have given readers "argument for a week, laughter for a month, and some nostalgia for ever"

THANK YOU FOR READING OUR BOOKLET. WE TRUST THAT YOU HAVE ENJOYED IT AND HOPE THAT YOU WILL TREASURE IT - OR PASS IT ON TO SOMEONE ELSE, OR GIVE IT TO A CHARITY SHOP OR PUT IT IN A RE-CYCLING BIN

**Harriett Nailon (Lott 1956-53)  
Chairman of ECSOGA 2008/9**



**As the existence of ECSOGA draws to an end, the committee wishes to thank all who have helped and supported the association during its 90+ years.**

**We wish good fortune and happiness to everyone who has a connection with ENFIELD COUNTY SCHOOL, past, present and future. May the school go ONWARD into its second century with every success and may the students of the next 100 years be like the contributors to this volume: EVER grateful for the education received and enjoyed at ECS.**

## Dickie Gleeson (Barbara Turpin 1943-50)

### RANDOM MEMORIES IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL MOSTLY DURING THE 40'S & 50'S

#### FOOD

SCHOOL DINNERS – at Primary School memory is rather jumbled. It seemed chaotic to me and also rather a bad mannered affair. Everyone was crammed at little tables in the hall, so very noisy and everyone ate so quickly and greedily, but it did feel all very lax and unsupervised without ever a 'grace' being said. I remember that I quite often went home during the lunch hour to make the beds and do the washing up to save my mother (who worked – quite rare in those days, but she was a bit of a career woman and did not enjoy being at home all the time. Now I can't think how on earth this was possible. I know I ran all the way there and back and did it all very quickly, but .... Things certainly were carefree in those days. I don't remember anyone ever being brought to school by a parent – except for the poor little girl so skinny, blue skinned and obviously very ill who was brought in a wheelchair daily. As she wasn't in 'our' class I had no idea what was wrong with her or even her name. I just used to smile at her and get on with playing some sort of chasing game around the playground, temporarily feeling guilty that I could run and she could not, but it was only passing. In those days nothing seemed to last for long and most definitely nothing seemed worth worrying about for more than a couple of seconds. It was overall all laughs! (Perhaps I should admit that I was a bit of a giggler and just always saw something to laugh at in most situations. I remember going to a birthday party and the father being furious with me as I wouldn't stop laughing and was quite unable to explain why I laughed so much – I was alive, everything was great and laughing always bubbled to the surface in a surfeit of good humour and happiness. I was so lucky – I WAS always happy then (apart from the occasional worry about doing well and being 'good' - couldn't avoid always being so concerned to please!)

At secondary school it was of course war time and BR (British Restaurant) meals featured regularly once a week for everyone. Most people detested it, but I usually found something mitigating like – for some reason I loved the custard – which at least made the stodgy puddings and tarts more palatable. Often the treacle tart was even worth a second helping if we were particularly hungry and that was always an easy option and pleased the 'servers' no end, whose one aim in life seemed to be to fatten us all up! The vegetable was without exception dreadful and soaked in 'water' but I didn't mind the spam or the dried egg omelette. BR tables were always on the stage at the Grammar School and even then such elevation felt good!

As there 'was a war on' we were not allowed to leave anything on our plate and this was checked by the staff on duty. The trick was to make sure that you didn't ask for or allow the cooks to give you more than you could manage – especially of those dreadful greens. I well remember the only time anyone (to my knowledge) defied Miss F. Sharp. Shirley my lovely mate of the neat little pigtails, pert little nose and demure manner – usually - left a small amount of greens (not sure now what it was) and prepared to tip it into the basin for the pigs. 'Effie' remonstrated and told Shirl to return to her seat and eat it up forthwith. She point blank refused. We were all totally gobsmacked and couldn't believe it. No one, but no one said 'no' to Effie of all people..... Actually I think it was quite a shock to Effie herself as I do not remember anything too terrible happening to Shirley, except that 'Effie' continued to tell her off all the way back to school and outside the classroom. It seemed to go on and on for hours all the remonstrances, but Shirley stuck to her guns and refused to cry, plead for forgiveness – just totally obstinately obdurate. She would NOT EAT IT – by now less than palatable and all getting a bit farcical. That was the first indication that the teachers were not 100% omnipotent. This, kids these days really not only know but in some schools fully exploit almost to an absurd length.

At least in those first years there was grace at the start of the meal. I think originally it was the whole hall, but then I seem to remember you could do it table by table firstly by a member of staff and then later on a prefect and eventually I think it got phased out altogether. Later as a prefect, I greatly enjoyed dashing back and forth checking on the queue between our hall (where they all lined up) and the Grammar Hall where there was a permanent queue at the hatch where the line of serving metal dishes steamed. It was a good excuse to squizz into the classroom en route and see what the boys were up to!! You might even occasionally see one of their prefects wafting along the corridor importantly. (Some no doubt featuring on my 'crush list' – the nearest we got to being a fan club I suppose).

Lunch times in the junior part of the school (ECS) was non stop activity. I remember I had so much energy that I used to run up and down the air raid shelter mounds endlessly, to make sure I could sit still in class when the bell went. Particularly later on there were innumerable practices and clubs to rush to and from and as a House Captain it was quite a busy time – taking in good and bad work marks, seeing members about team practices and events, keeping the house noticeboard up to date and interesting. I did so many things with my house from early morning (well before school) training sessions to get ready for the tournaments and sports days etc. to organised things like play reading evenings (when I would send for the set from French's & buy all sorts of refreshments in the lunch hour to resell - it never seemed to bother me if I broke even or had spoiled leftovers etc. and I expect my parents were good enough to pay for the postage. I made special arrangements with the library to borrow a pile of gramophone records which I compiled into some sort of recital. This was good for my general knowledge as I looked up all sorts of facts to link each piece, then there were quiz and games sessions ... and of course the outings on Saturdays up to London to see the ballet at Covent Garden or a theatre production in the West End. I would get a party ticket in advance, so had to write to each parent asking permission and requesting the full amount for the travel and ticket. It varied a bit but was always 30 – 50!! These days that would be unthinkable and certainly would never be allowed, but then only a few mothers even came to the market (our meeting place) to see their daughters off in charge of little old me. This was partly because I wanted to make sure as many people as possible had the good fortune to see things when young. I was even then eternally grateful to my mum's dad (Nobby I called him as he was sometimes 'crusty' when the shrapnel in his neck from the 1st WW moved to a painful position. He took me from the age of 3 years to the theatre, ballet and opera. The PURE MAGIC of those wonderful wonderful trips I can never recapture. I absolutely was enraptured every time and I think, as my own kids did at similar early ages, I sat motionless between curtain up and curtain down. Certainly the magic is not so bright and all consuming now as it was then, although maybe in different ways I do still appreciate and love it - maybe even more.

At home my mum worked mini miracles with the coupons and although I can remember often being peckish I always felt that was only being young and energetic and part of growing up. I well remember the whispers when old Mr. Ansell was going to kill one of his pigs. He had the butchers shop at the end of Baker Street, which has now been enlarged and become a nursing home overlooking the public Green, which in my youth was HIS garden, private and precluding that little bit of Myddleton Avenue which did not exist then. As one of his favoured customers (everyone loved my parents they were SO kind and generous and always ready to help someone else, so were always included on any such 'promotion') we always benefited from sundry 'goodies' - a few thick rashers, meaty sausages and even the odd pork cutlet.... Yum yum.

The thing you could buy as, or for, a child, was blackcurrant puree (to add Vitamin C to the diet – as did the Orange Juice in medicine bottles). I was a real pig for that and any time there was any opportunity I was off to buy some for tea. Thank goodness not everyone liked it and it was not rationed as such, so I was delighted that dear Mr. Garrett (well known Samaritan and pharmacist locally) always managed to find me a tin whenever I trotted in hopefully. Later on he was brilliant at making up all sorts of wet-white, -green and -brown for dressing up for various events, a quick make up for large areas of skin. He was always my first port of call when any make up (fancy dress not face) was required.

At primary school and possibly just before the war, I can remember having the occasional halfpenny or even a penny to spend on sweets and the range of delights that little old shop at the top end of Lavender Road used to offer to the swarm of youngsters reaching up with their coins waving... gob stoppers, licorice pipes, traffic lights, bootlaces, mini sugar cigarettes, little shells from Japan which opened up and 'flowered' in water, sherbet dabs (my favourite – I loved the explosive bubbles and even at other times made a sort of fizzy lemonade with Eno's fruit salts !!) (don't remember ever getting the runs either – although I have always had a cast iron stomach. Notably while dancing in Romania and being so thirsty and not prepared to drink ale/beer succumbed to the well water at a farm (severely warned against doing this) and I was the only one of the whole group not to have food poisoning/runs etc. throughout the whole trip.)

Fruit was the other thing, which registered far more AFTER the war when I saw bananas and pineapple for the first time. As there was not very much and usually only home grown it didn't feature in my memories except for the scrumping expeditions to the wild apple trees behind the scout hut at Maiden's Bridge and elsewhere. Visiting my dear old Nobby was great – he always was ready to walk me round his garden and show off his loganberries (very exotic – most of my friends had never heard of them at that time), blackberries, black currants, red currants apples and pears. My Grandma was a wonderful cook and turned almost anything into chutney, jam or some sort of edible delight – no doubt from being a country lass and brought up to use absolutely everything – never throwing anything away which could be useful – like her enormous bag of buttons. Such buttons – like Aladdin's cave – used when we played card games, put and take and such as our stakes and it was a great delight to pick your own from the wonderful magic selection.

Occasionally with my dad (or Nobby) we went foraging for mushrooms. Thank goodness that wasn't left to us alone. I well remember the sad day in school when Miss M.C. Sharp announced that Eileen (forgotten her surname) had been bereaved as her mother and little brother had both succumbed to mushrooms (which turned out to be toadstools.). She and the other members of her family had also eaten them, but either in less quantity or with a stronger constitution, so survived. Ever since then I have preferred to eat only those bought in a shop – hoping that they surely couldn't be selling poisonous things ever.

In another way we were privileged too. One of my Australian cousins joined the Navy and came over here to do his bit and on leave he would come and stay with us, bringing with him a little 'ditty bag' (a sort of special small attaché case) FULL of chocolate. He used to save ALL his ration for us and when he

came he would just empty it all out over the table to our paroxysms of delight. Dad always ensured we behaved well and only had a little bit now and again to make it last. The rest of the Australian family (particularly my lovely Uncle John) sent regular food parcels, so after months travelling delay we would have an extra Christmas with tins of fruit, marmalade, jam, butter (didn't care about it being rancid after all those weeks) and ham etc. Fortunately he lived long enough to have fully appreciative letters, parcels from us to him and photos etc., when we were older. Then we also had his daughter to stay for 3 months when we were first married. He sent a taped message and we could return the compliment. That was magic and almost made up for never being able to visit and SEE him and the others.

Again we were extremely lucky as my parents were able occasionally to take us out for tea or fish and chips at the one and only 'Tea Room cum Restaurant in Baker Street - Sylvie's! Wonder who else remembers that and its delights (very plain by today's standards of course, but nice neat little tables with linen tablecloths and serviettes). Later on there were those wonderful Lyon's Corner Houses to go and visit. The lavish 'eat as much as you like' floor was great – even a tinkling piano or singer entertaining most of the day as well. Several people would even stay the whole night if their travel arrangements were a bit difficult or they wanted to save a night's lodging. Anyone could buy a cup of coffee and stay having refills for hours. The 'nippies' without fail were always chatty and very alert and generous with refills. It was just so homely and comfortable – no wonder it was always filled – even during the night. It really was a very special place and the decor was often lavish. Not at all 'caff' like. My lovely older cousin introduced me to its delights as an older teenager when my grandpa had tailed off a bit with the theatre & ballet visits. She was like an indulgent older sister to me and I just hope she enjoyed herself half as much as I did on those outings. I did always manage to make her laugh a lot and that surely helped. It was one of my favourite places. I remember taking a Spanish couple I got talking to there, to the Arts Theatre nearby and then back to the Corner House for a further chat and more coffee. It's lovely looking back to those essentially safe and free times. I probably wouldn't even engage them in conversation now – let alone treat them and spend most of a day with them (complete strangers I was never likely to see again, but just felt full of bonhomie towards – like a British Ambassador for Friendship!)

However I would also like to mention that we were not always thinking of our stomachs and in those carefree days when we roamed to our heart's content in the local parks like Whitewebbs during the summer holidays we were out from after breakfast, sometimes not returning until tea time - without any sandwiches, drinks or even sweets – but we were so enjoying running around, fishing for tiddlers, climbing trees and playing games in the undergrowth we never noticed until we got back home, REALLY ready for ANY thing forthcoming and of course ready to help with laying the table etc. and patiently waiting for all to be ready.

Before I leave this gigantic subject of 'food' I wonder how many remember the pig bins at the top of each road? The lid was chained on – not because someone might steal it, but to make sure it didn't roll away in a high wind to cause an accident. The local farmers used to come every few days to empty them, but of course in the summer the bins were not always popular – particularly if they happened to be located outside

your front door. There were often flies if someone left the lid off and sometimes smells too. I well remember my mum being very cross when I ran up the road in bare feet with the peelings etc. 'people will think we are gypsies'. (I still do like to run about barefoot). Often it was like the village pump as people tended to run up with the peelings about the same time and stay for a chat.

### WAR TIME NOTES.

Thinking of the roads then – only sparsely sprinkled with transport – reminds me how honest everyone was. Each bus had a 'clippie'/conductor (mostly young women during the war, always looking as though their shirts would burst open any moment with the 'pinger' for clipping the tickets sticking out on top of their ample bosoms. They had a wooden clipboard thing with all the blank tickets held down with a spring loaded clip, from which they pulled out the relevant colour and pinged it into life for the mostly penny fare. They ran up and down stairs – buses always seemed to be very busy and full of comings and goings no matter what time of day. If she happened to be upstairs when your stop came and she had not taken your penny you just left it on the big long seat by the door, or if someone was sitting there gave it to them to give her! No one ever skipped off without paying – you just didn't think of that. As I child I just remember everyone being so cheerful and always chatting to us. Very much like a village atmosphere.

I recollect the palaver of putting strips of sticky brown paper all over the windows in fairly set patterns, although I do remember my mum trying to make it a bit more artistic! Then there was the nightly calls from the Wardens patrolling the streets, searching out any chink of light which might help a Nazi bomber above. 'Put that light out!' always sounded like Jack Warner to me! It was quite tricky walking in the dark in the winter and I remember my Grandma had a very nasty accident walking into a low wall and suffering 2 black eyes as a result. Before school we would all rush out into our quiet road to collect shrapnel, shell caps etc., which had 'arrived' during the night time barrage. I always wondered why so much of the shrapnel was rusty and how on earth that could be when they were new. We were very proud of our collections and I was quite sad when my mum threw out my collection years later when we moved while I was away at college.

I shall never forget the night the landmine demolished a huge chunk of Willow Road, which blew out windows and doors for 'miles'. The vibration was terrifying – I thought it was an earthquake and the house would fall down. Quite a few pupils died in that raid, but like Enid Fortescue and family (bombed out in Brigadier Hill) they didn't miss school and were only temporarily excused school uniform. So much was taken in our stride in those days.

First of all we shared an Anderson shelter built at the bottom of our neighbour's garden, so our fence came down for easy access. My dad dug it out and put it up all by himself as her husband was away in the RAF. It was very cramped and I well remember the luxury of occasionally being able to lie flat on a plank bench instead of crunched up in a little deckchair. It was so cold and damp and so many spiders despite the efforts of my dad to fill in the cracks/joins and the smell of damp was overwhelming.

There was the afternoon when a Messerschmitt pouring out smoke and flames flew low over our gardens so that we could all see the pilot waving... as he sank crippled – to crash in Cufley I think. No one thought about the possibility of him machine gunning us all at such close range – it was very exciting

and we cheered to think it was one less German bomber in action. The 'snowstorm' of black, charred paper and smuts which filled the sky to make it almost night when Fleet Street was heavily bombed remains as a bleak day – or was it two. The smoke, acrid fumes, blackened flakes were just everywhere and hid the sun throughout the day. The atmosphere was so serious too – it was obviously a major catastrophe. Later on we were given a Morrison shelter, which destroyed our lounge. Such a huge thick metal 'table' on massive legs. It seemed enormous and so cumbersome. We used to climb under on top of the mattresses on the floor beneath to do our homework – again our parents never seemed to join us under there for any sleep. I hated that as I felt I couldn't possibly do justice to the writing in such circumstances. Also I was used to my own bedroom and did not appreciate my brother 'larking about' all the time. The air raids could be quite fun though and I remember coming back from Sunday School (Jesus Church, Forty Hill) and naughtily going into the shelter at Forty Hill rather than scoot home – just for the stolen pleasure of eating part of the bar of Fry's Sandwich choc bar which my parents always provided in our gasmask bags to make sure we weren't hungry if the air raid went on for a long time. How they survived all the extra worry and stress of all their extra jobs, making our lives as carefree and enjoyable as possible – just endless 'grind' and unrelenting stress for them.

### TRAVELLING.

Before the war I remember being taken up to Nobby's office in the City to watch the Lord Mayor's Procession. Splendid rooms they were too. I can still remember the colour, hilarity and fantastic costumes and 'buildings' on the floats. Real magic. My mum used to arrange the Banquet and always delighted in telling us exactly which wine for which course and how to serve things, but now I can't really remember exactly when that was. This makes me think of another pageant. EMPIRE DAY 24<sup>th</sup> MAY. Before the war at Infant School I well remember that special day when I learnt so much about all the countries of our Empire, their songs, traditions, clothing, food, houses - just endless interesting information presented in such a colourful way. There was some sort of collection of artefacts which I think the older children had brought in – or may even have made. It was such a Gala and totally un-school day. Underlying it all was the assumption that we should be proud of all our brothers and sisters of different colours and creeds and that we as the Mother Country had a special obligation to help them all, which is one reason why I still feel obliged to contribute to all the good causes for our ex-empire lands, now invariably suffering so much in its often corrupt independence/dictatorship. We all had little flags to wave (Union Jacks of course) sang patriotic songs too and even did a little march around the playground. Not sure why now, but there was no doubt it was a VERY SPECIAL DAY. The week before, every class had produced special drawings and greetings for them. Certainly there were lots of parcels, messages and sundry things sent off to these far flung corners of the world. I think there had been some sort of collection to fund this, but I was very young and the memory is rather patchy now.

At school after the war we were all encouraged to send parcels to all the occupied countries and particularly to

Germany and France (learning those languages at school). It was underlined that we should turn the page and try to be with Germans now hostilities had ceased. I was very miffed that none of my parcel recipients availed themselves of my address and wrote, but Joyce Miller had replies from ALL of her parcels and did not want to write to even one, so busily handed out names and addresses for others to correspond with. That was how I started a lifelong friendship with a Dutch girl, Mieke, who could have been a long lost sister we got on so well. Luckily for us her dad was the Burgomeister of the little town she lived in, so was able to fly over and stay with us a couple of weeks in the summer holidays. That was a bit difficult as her English was still rather basic, and we all knew NOTHING of Holland and its way. Additionally I did not appreciate that as she came from more of a country town, much smaller than Enfield and miles away from big cities, the fortune I spent on tramping her all over London and organising one exciting trip after another was not quite what she was expecting or in fact enjoyed too much. In those days of course we were all far too polite to say exactly what we would prefer and could not decline any offer. Luckily for me my parents managed to stump up the fare and I flew to Schiphol on a return visit the following year. Then it became clear how different our lives were. I spent all the time riding to other villages on a bike (rather too big for me and very 'sit up and beg'), but I met lots of her friends and they were very kind and aired their English quite well. Her stepmother was extremely kind to me, particularly the day her boyfriend came to visit and I felt really lonely, forgotten and bedraggled. She got me to take little Dineke her young daughter to the fields to pick fruit and play and generally enjoy the sun and laughing with a young child where mime and funny actions were all that was needed to communicate. After that – and her English becoming almost perfect, we came to know and love each other dearly. I visited her when she was at Utrecht University and went to a Ball in a borrowed gown (much too big for me) riding pillion on her boyfriend's bike and was presented to the Queen Wilhelmina there as well!!!

My wonderful parents emptied their bank account so that I could join the school trip to Switzerland and Paris organised by Miss Forrest. Wow that was excitement indeed. All travelling on the train and feeling so grown up. It was so clean, sunny and fresh up in the mountains above Lake Lucerne. We marched round the Castle of Chinon, went on trams, looked in the huge glassy shops in the town, went up the cable car and explored the top of the mountain, even airing our very elementary French in the local shops where we all bought the obligatory £2 watch and loads of sweets. The lovely dirndl wearing people at the hotel pressed so many second helpings, cream, ice cream and RICH food we hadn't had since we could remember, eventually led to the inevitable consequence – even our cast iron strong kids' constitutions succumbed to greater or lesser extent, overwhelmed by the unexpected richness and over plenty of the food.. The ones staying in the big hotel on the Lakeside all fell in love with the very 'dishy' waiter I remember. As I was getting into photography and my dad had taught me how to print and develop a film, I remember spending hours in the bathroom (my makeshift dark room) reproducing his head and shoulders in a rosette – as though he was 1st prize in the local gymkhana. I wonder if anyone still has their copy??

The much later trip to the Sorbonne was great. Margaret (Stephenson) and I persisted in speaking French to each other all the time in the hope that we would be taken for French. Certainly in the bus when we went off by ourselves to visit her friends no one paid the slightest notice of us – which we of course took as a sign that we were indeed merging into the background and becoming Parisian!!

### **BADEN POWELL'S LEGACY.**

My dad was one of the original 'Broomstick Brigade' as the first Scouts were known, because of the staff they carried as part of the uniform. He was extremely enthusiastic and didn't take too much persuasion during the war to start 6<sup>th</sup> ENFIELD (St. Luke's) Troup. My brother had been a leading member of the large, highly successful pack run by Akela Searle, which was the reason we swapped churches and went up to St. Luke's! My mum thought it too unladylike for me to join the Brownies, but I was a very enthusiastic supporter of the Pack and helped whenever I could. I delighted in taking a full part in all the visitors' day's activities like Parents v boys cricket. It was mostly fairly close by at Ayot St. Lawrence (or St. Peter, the neighbouring parish, where Church Parade always took place. As most of you know St. Lawrence's church was most unchurchlike looking and sited the furthest end of a big field, because the local 'lord of the Manor' took exception to his view being spoilt by the older church, he allowed to fall into ruin. They occasionally saw GBS strolling down the street close to his house (Shaw's Corner.) Later on when Nan's journalist brother went to visit him and we fully realised the importance of the old man, it was nice to know of those close encounters.

Later on (like my dad) I ran the Brownies at St. John's with Anne Reynard to ensure that Sula could enjoy some Scouting. As ever always trying to push the horizons out a bit and make sure that they all worked for a good range of badges, one half term I organised a week's Horse Riding and Stable Management course for the Pack. I borrowed the Church Bus (Gabriel, which I drove at weekends anyway to pick up the elderly or long distance parishioners) and made sure they all enjoyed themselves, didn't forget their packed lunch and made the most of the lessons, mucking out, cleaning the tack and RIDING in Epping Forest which was where the yard backed onto. Magic. We could easily imagine Robin Hood behind the trees! They were all so thrilled with the certificate and then passing the badge to add to their pretty covered sleeves. I was very proud Sula managed to get every badge going except skiing and skating – for obvious reasons. Both she and Finn were among the youngest ever to achieve the relevant Queen's Award. I travelled up by coach to witness Finn's special presentation in Durham and had a big party for Sula's Queen's Guide celebration in the Church Hall. Not likely to miss an opportunity for throwing a party - especially in those days.

### **THEATRE.**

As I have already mentioned my grandfather made sure I was well and truly hooked on all forms of theatre (incl. Opera and ballet) at a very young age, so of course I was immediately enthusiastic and delighted to be taught by M.K. Flint at school. Almost all our teachers were superb, charismatic, hard working, inspiring and generally wonderful, but 'Flint' was one of the best – at least as far as we were concerned – maybe a bit of a pain in the staff room as over enthusiastic



people sometimes can be.. (My dear pal Jean nee Gilson subsequently was Deputy Head at the prestigious King Edward's School, B'm, where she moved and then was forced to amend her feelings as Flint bulldozed everything for the productions, etc.) The opportunities she gave us and the fire she lit for all literature/reading/learning was fantastic. How lucky we were to be taken on a trip to Camden Town to see the renowned (and not for much longer, aging), Donald Wolfit and his wife Rosalind Iden. We may have been critical (as only the young and ignorant can be) but what an experience and that was one my grandpa missed! The School production of 12<sup>th</sup> Night with my hero (ine) Brenda Saunders giving a consummately talented performance of Malvolio was so arresting, without any conscious effort I found that I had remembered huge chunks of the play. It is still one of my favourites and despite my failing memory I can still quote goodly chunks of it. Before being awakened I had thought speaking out well (i.e. loudly, clearly and doing credit to those elocution lessons, which had stood me in good stead since before going to school when I first read the lesson in Church and was mobbed by the grannies as a child prodigy). Thanks to dear Flint I/we all soon knew better and worked at our parts. I maintained my interest and used to do closed circuit television for director training, a few things with Trevor Peacock in his plays and even a season in 'Pygmalion' at Torquay. Now I confine myself to the Play reading group of the Shaw Society, which is largely professional actors and very enjoyable. (Anyone like to come along??)

Not only my grandpa was good to me in this regard, my dad for a few years used to have regular family seats every week at the Intimate Theatre with a very good rep. co. I well remember such items as Sheila Sims as Saint Joan and being so extra friendly and forthcoming afterwards when meeting the regulars in the Tea Bar. Don't let's forget the number of times Miss Marion took us off to the Institut Français in S. Ken for classic productions of Molière and Corneille. She even encouraged us to make up little playettes of our own in French for performance – as did Miss Roberts in Spanish. Yes our teachers really were very extra special.

It was a great thrill to meet up again with Brenda (Saunders) later when I was taking my two kids along to the Saturday workshops at the Unicorn Theatre based at the Arts Theatre near Leicester Square at that time. She had brought along her daughter, so they actually shared the activities together!! I remember how proud I was when they made particular mention and gave great acclaim to Finn's set painting of a toy-shop – huge life size paintings of a soldier and other toys. Not surprising that his first degree was in Fine Art and he has held some successful exhibitions too. Sula also did Fine Art with Education for her first degree including all sorts of extras like Stage Manager/Lighting plots etc. and extra certificates with the Drama Dept. while at Exeter Uni. and now is doing interpreting for some plays. Finn's god father is Trevor Peacock so we have often been backstage and into the Green Room to chat to him and the others after a performance. I well remember being so keen for them to see Trev as Bottom at Regents Park that I didn't write the usual absence note for their first school day missed, but boldly claimed the visit was educational and a unique opportunity which I trusted they would condone – gobsmacked was more like it I think!

## Learning:

it's at the heart  
of everything we  
do

