

OB NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019



Old Biltonian Society



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President's Welcome

Dear Biltonians and Homefieldians,

Welcome to our 2019 Newsletter! I must offer my sincere thanks once again to Tony Millinger for the commitment and judicious editorial skill he brings to this publication. Do please continue to share with us any news that would be of interest to the wider Biltonian community. We do so enjoy the opportunity to celebrate the achievements and the milestones of Biltonians and Homefieldians of all ages.



The OBS Committee has maintained its supportive stance towards the School throughout the last year, and we were delighted in particular to be able to facilitate the new extension to the Music Schools, as the space provided by the old fives courts was cleverly re-deployed. It was rewarding to see that particular project come to fruition, and very gratifying to see the Old Biltonian Society credited so publicly in the foyer. It is pleasing to know that pupils and parents, staff and governors will be able to note such concrete evidence of the contribution offered by the Society to the School which we so revere.

I thank David Searle for his sterling contribution during his first year or so in post. A senior member of staff at Bilton Grange, and one well-known to so many of you, he has proved to be the ideal person to lead the Society at the School. I thank him especially for his excellent report on the 2018 OB Day, published in the Bilton Record. I thank Nicola Valentino too; she must have been well-briefed by her predecessor in post, Emily Rycroft, judging by her skilful management of the President thus far. I have very much enjoyed the recent return of the 'Throwback Thursday' feature on the OBS facebook page – do continue to view those posts and to add your own comments to Nicola's broad-ranging selections.

I have been privileged once again to pay regular visits to the School in my role as President – my thanks to the Headmaster, as always! Bilton continues to evolve, of course, but certain things never change – the magnificence of the grounds, the neatness of the lawns, the wildness of the wild gardens, the enthusiasm of the pupils, the range of the opportunities offered, the alacrity with which they are taken.

I shall hope to meet many more of you at our various Biltonian events over the coming year. (Once again, our London drinks gathering in January was great fun.) You will be very welcome at any event, but particularly at our Old Biltonian Day in June, so deftly-woven nowadays into the School's own activities.

With sincere best wishes to Biltonians and Homefieldians of all generations,

Tim Day (Homefield 1974—1978, Bilton Grange 1978—1983)
President

Headmaster's Welcome

It is a pleasure to again welcome you to this newsletter which hopes to encourage you to remember, to reconnect, and to rekindle your friendships, your memories and your love for your Prep School. Indeed our sense of Bilton Grange as a community which you never leave is an important part of what makes the School so special and we are always looking to make those bonds stronger and to keep in touch more effectively – in this day and age, both the opportunities and the challenges are at times overwhelming!



Three examples of our community come immediately to mind. Monica Summerson, a former Homefield and Bilton Grange teacher, lives in close proximity to Dunchurch and this means that we can, in person, make quite a fuss of her on her 100th birthday this month, both on the day itself and then once term has recommenced!

Secondly, at the other end of the age spectrum, we are instigating a 'new tradition' this coming September when we invite the Class of 2014 – as it happens, my first 6th Form – to return to Bilton Grange in September, before university or gap years start in earnest, for an evening of dinner, memories, meeting old teachers and, yes, keeping us up to date with their senior school adventures, their onward plans and their contact details!

Finally, Bilton past and present were in perfect harmony on the boards of the NT Olivier Theatre this spring, as current parent Joanna Riding and Old Biltonian Alex Hanson took the lead roles in an acclaimed production of Stephen Sondheim's 'Follies'. Freya and I very much enjoyed meeting them both after the show and Jo was also wonderfully generous in giving time and opportunity to both a current and an Old Biltonian with interests in technical theatre, arranging for them to sit with the technical team during performances. There are a few more performances in May before the production ends, so I strongly recommend you go to see it! Alex came to give a Bilton Lecture a couple of years ago about his life in theatre, when our former President, Bill Krarup, reminisced about their school production of *The Sound of Music*: from such seeds has a mighty artistic oak arisen.

Our current generation of actors have just completed their own run of 'Annie' to great acclaim, our academic scholars have excelled in their pursuits, Hockey players have just returned from successful forays to Spain and Norfolk (Norfolk was sunnier!) and the School is hale and hearty, as I hope are all of you. I very much look forward to seeing you soon, and wish you all the very best for the year ahead.

Alex Osiatynski
Headmaster



Our Under 12s played Hockey of the highest level with every member of the squad contributing to the fine achievement of becoming Midlands Champions. We comfortably won the group matches with three wins before beating Solihull 6-0 in the semi-final, going on to win overall against Oakham 5-0.



Eight 3rd Form pupils attended a morning of team academic challenges at Rugby School. They were fortunate to experience Rugby School's debating chamber – modelled on the House of Commons.



After their Common Entrance exams, many of the 6th Form headed off to Jersey for a wonderful mix of beach time, sunsets, sport and memory-making.

A Year in Pictures



6th Form Common Entrance results clearly were well received; the room erupted into an enormous cheer when pupils heard that everyone had passed!



Our Reception children joined in with Royal Wedding celebrations by decorating their own crowns to wear at our Royal Wedding lunch. They looked fabulous!



Towards the end of the Summer term we welcomed the Miraculum Children's Choir, an award-winning choral group from the Kodály Music School in Kecskemét, Hungary.



The Senior Chapel Choir performed at the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate (not realising that a very appreciative Michael Morpurgo was in the audience!).



The Juniors and 3rd Form enjoyed a trip to Sern Lodge in Devon. The children were engaged in a plethora of activities from surfing to rafting.

From the Chair of Governors at Bilton Grange

As an Old Biltonian it gives me great pride to write now as Chairman of the Governors of Bilton Grange. As I look back over the past twelve months, as you will see celebrated in this newsletter, it is clear that Bilton Grange has had another memorable and successful year.



If I can pick out one highlight, it would be the Remembrance Service in November, at which our current pupils read out, one by one, the names of the 155 Old Biltonians who gave their lives in the armed conflict serving our Nation during the Great War. Those were boys who had learned in our classrooms, slept in our dormitories, played on our games field, and sung like us in our chapel. Their sacrifice, and our recognition of it, still marks our whole community and we shall never forget the debt so many of us owe to so few.

Our pupils today have excelled, not only in their progress in learning, but also in their participation in the many events, festivals, performances, inter-school challenges, and fixtures in which they take part. Crucially, they have excelled in their own individual goals and achievements. Governance of a school like Bilton is a major commitment, but it is made so much easier every time I visit our School by the palpable warmth in the classrooms, out in the wonderful gardens, on the games pitches and in the boarding houses. That all takes a huge team effort not only from all of our staff, but also from our pupils and from their parents. So on behalf of the whole Bilton Grange community, I share our thanks with all of them.

We continue to strive to ensure that our pupils have the best opportunities, whether that is being taught by inspirational teachers, or by having world-class facilities to draw out and encourage new-found aptitudes. Notable this year was the opening of our Music School extension, such a wonderful addition to our facilities and already furthering musical interest and achievement in our pupils. Our thanks to all of those who so generously donated to this wonderful project.

Our principal aim as a School is always, of course, to ensure that each child is nurtured and supported, as from this contentment a child can grow and learn, reaching their true potential. I am delighted that we are providing that exceptional environment for our pupils and I hope that one day, they will look back and see what a fortunate start they have been given. The Bilton Grange pupils of today will, as adults, be employed in roles that we may not as yet imagine. We may be confident nonetheless that the experiences that they have had here and the skills that they learn will equip them for a global marketplace in which they will be ready to thrive.

Charles Barwell OBE (OB: 1979–1981)

SCHOLARSHIPS 2018

Monty Bantoft
[Foundation Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Archie Das Gupta
[All-Rounder Scholarship to Princethorpe College and a Foundation Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Tom Dodsley
[All-Rounder Scholarship to Princethorpe College](#)

Leia Gonzalez-Lee
[Sports Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Mathilda Kember
[Academic Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Jonas Mackay
[Academic Scholarship to Oundle School](#)

Kereesen Martin
[Music Scholarship to Uppingham School](#)

Scarlett Mitchell
[Academic Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Henry Woodward
[Sports Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Henry Zheng
[Art Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

SCHOLARSHIP SUCCESS TO DATE 2019

James Bartle-Jones
[Sports Exhibition to Stowe School](#)

Tom Castle
[Academic Scholarship to Uppingham School](#)

Miriam Chow
[Academic Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Edgar Coates
[Sports and Academic Scholarships to Rugby School](#)

Alex Fuentes Grant
[Foundation Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Sasha Hardman
[Sports Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Jasmine Hickman
[Drama Scholarship to Kingham Hill School](#)

Annabel Ingram
[Sports Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Dyllan Keane
[Foundation Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Alasdair Kerr
[Sports Exhibition to Oundle School](#)

Tegan Martle
[Sports Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Ffion Purviss
[Sports Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Jimmy Scanlon
[Music and Academic Scholarships to Rugby School](#)

Rupert Sneath
[Academic Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Nia-Jayne Sutton
[Drama Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

William Tarrant
[Sports Scholarships to Repton School and Rugby School](#)

Peter Winther
[Foundation Scholarship to Rugby School](#)

Opening of the Music School

The generosity and support of the Bilton Grange community enabled us to open the extension to our Music School in the Michaelmas term.

On Friday 18th January the School welcomed governors, those who had donated to this wonderful development project and MP Mr Nadhim Zahawi, Minister for Children and Families, who officially opened the facility.

The Music School, which had been significantly enhanced in 1985, hosts over 180 individual instrumental lessons per week, orchestral rehearsals, concerts and vocal recitals and visiting musical groups, such as Warwickshire Choristers. Needless to say the new space is already being put to very good use.

Musical learning has always been highly valued amongst the breadth of opportunities open to a Bilton Grange pupil, and now, with such an impressive facility, interest has grown even further. The additional space enables us to embrace an individual's desire to start (or return) to an instrument, improve a talent or simply encourage a child to try something new. Music not only plays an important role in education but also in the mental wellbeing of pupils. Even if we succeed in only raising one's spirit with just a few notes, then we have achieved a sound base on which to build further interest and a lifetime love of music. As a school we seek to support the developing child by finding their niche or talent, with an end goal of reaching contentment and achieving a modest, but clear confidence and sense of success.

The opening of the Music School was well attended and a very vibrant event, with a variety of musical instruments being played in each room. We were delighted that Mr Zahawi was able to attend. He commented, 'It's my privilege to open this facility, not only because it will help Bilton Grange pupils excel in their learning of music, but because it will also provide benefit to the local community. I would like to encourage other local groups to contact the school to find out about the possibilities of using this space.'

Mr Penrose, Director of Performing Arts, commented, "I am so grateful to the School community for supporting generously this extension to our facilities, reflecting the value that Bilton Grange places on Music and the Performing Arts. We are incredibly proud of the musical standards our pupils reach, and these new rooms will enable us to inspire more pupils and further extend our outstanding provision. We extend our sincere gratitude to the OBs, OHs, current and former parents who donated to this wonderful facility, thus enabling us to further promote musical curiosity in our pupils."

If you feel that you would like to contribute to the Music School too and further encourage our pupils' love and learning of music, please do let us know by contacting Nicola Valentino on 01788 818249 or at obsociety@biltongrange.co.uk



Headmaster Alex Osiatynski (left) with MP Nadhim Zahawi



The Music School at the start of the project



From left to right: MP Nadhim Zahawi, Darren Knapp, Richard Palmer, Adam Greatrex (Contractors), Andrew Parker (Deputy Bursar), Nick Winther (Bursar) and Alex Osiatynski (Headmaster)



Alumni Profiles

Lucy Ball (1997—2002)

Tell us about your success and the pathway that led you to your current role:

I currently run my own small business designing and making Handmade Bespoke wooden Home-wares, called Planked Dorset. I hope to expand in the future to larger pieces of furniture (when I get a bigger workshop!!). Alongside this I work as a Design Technology Technician at a Senior School in Dorset, supporting GCSE and A Level Students. It is great to work in a school, it makes you appreciate your own education and hopefully help and inspire some designers of the future.

How did your time at Bilton Grange support and encourage you?

Bilton Grange encouraged me to excel in the areas I was really interested in and enjoyed.

Do you have a special memory from School that you would like to share?

I have many special memories... playing in the quad after lunch, waiting for Mr Day to open the Tuck Shop! As well as DT, I really enjoyed all sport, getting involved in Hockey, Tennis, Netball, Rounders, Athletics and even Cricket, plus I remember you got a very nice match tea!

Which teacher particularly helped, inspired or supported you?

I have fond memories of a lot of my teachers. Obviously doing what I do now, it was Mr Tovey that inspired and supported me in my love of all things DT, he helped me achieve a Design Technology Scholarship to Bloxham, which helped lead me to where I am today.

What advice would you give to pupils who might like to follow a similar path?

Enjoy your time at School and absorb and experience as much as you can. In terms of Designing and Making, I would suggest getting some experience working for a furniture/cabinet maker, whether it be after a Degree course or as an Apprentice. This will give you a great platform to start your own business later on.



Lucy Ball

Joseph Barsby (1998—2005)

Tell us about your success and the pathway that led you to your current role:

I was honoured to win the Young Entrepreneur of the Year 2018 at the Niche Business Awards. Since leaving school I have been in my family business from the age of nineteen and was made Managing Director at twenty-three. I have worked in the majority of positions within the business, earning the respect of the team and also making sure I had a proper insight into how everything worked.

How did your time at Bilton Grange support and encourage you?

It has taught me to be independent and confident in my own ability.

Do you have a special memory from School that you would like to share?

I will always remember the wild gardens and my time growing up with Paddy Kellett, both at Bilton Grange and at Bloxham. He will never be forgotten.

Which teacher particularly helped, inspired or supported you?

Tony Millinger was certainly a teacher that helped me a lot and I still stay in contact with him now. He gives invaluable advice, I really respect what he achieved in his career; he had and still has a real aptitude for having commonality with anyone.

What advice would you give to pupils looking to follow a similar path?

My career path is somewhat niche, in that I am a Funeral Director & Memorial Mason. I would say to any current students that they should be passionate and dedicated in whatever path they take.



Joseph Barsby receiving his award

Alumni Profiles

Anna Whitmore (2003—2006)

Tell us about your success and the pathway that led you to your current role:

Having left Bilton Grange convinced I wanted to return as a sports teacher, life took a slightly different turn. At Durham University I started to explore where I wanted to start my career and I decided that consulting might be the thing for me. Not knowing exactly what that was at the time, I got a fantastic role within a large technology consulting firm. I am currently working as a senior security consultant helping to defend the government and businesses around the world from cybercrime. Earlier this year I was shortlisted for the TechWomen100 awards, set out to recognise the fantastic work undertaken by women in our industry.



How did your time at Bilton Grange support and encourage you?

I think the key thing for me at school was sport. I played absolutely every sport I was able to and loved every second (OK, apart from Cross Country, but let's be honest, no one actually enjoyed that). Not only did it teach me sportsmanship, but also to work hard to achieve my goals.

Do you have a special memory from School that you would like to share?

I must have been in 4th form at the time, and we were off for a swimming match at another school a few hours away. After about an hour the coach broke down on the motorway, shortly followed by an announcement that Prince Harry was in fact visiting Bilton Grange that day to teach the first team Rugby. A coach full of forty furious pupils not only missed the swimming match but also the chance to meet Prince Harry. We were finally rescued from the hard shoulder and taken back to school, no Prince Harry in sight and it turned out I had also forgotten my swimming costume...

Which teacher particularly helped, inspired or supported you?

Mr Nicholson, Mr Hodge and Mrs Bevin, unsurprisingly, my sports teachers. I am still in touch with them today.

What advice would you give to pupils who might like to follow a similar path?

Make the most of all the amazing opportunities that Bilton Grange will give you. The people I met, the skills I learnt and experiences I had, have all led me to where I am today.

Memories

OB Memories – Monica Summerson, teacher at Bilton Grange and Homefield, 1942—1981

On a recent visit to see Monica Summerson (née Johnson) she spoke with great passion about her time at Bilton Grange and Homefield. Now celebrating her 100th birthday, she looks back with fondness on those days.

In 1942, at the age of twenty-three, Monica left Roundham School in Paignton, Devon, to join Bilton Grange. She quickly became a much loved teacher of the youngest boys in the School, teaching them French, Latin and Cricket among other subjects. Her love of gardening seeped into her teaching, often referencing nature in the classroom and venturing into the wonderful grounds for many lessons.

It was here at Bilton Grange that Monica met her late husband, Peter, in 1942. After they were married they moved to live off-site as there was unfortunately no married accommodation available at the time. They moved to Rugby and then to Bilton, living in a house not far from the School in Dalkeith Avenue. The Summersons had three children, two daughters and a son. After her third child started at Homefield in the early 60s Monica returned to fulltime teaching, this time at Homefield, becoming form mistress of Form 2, teaching Maths, Latin, Geography and Writing, among other subjects. Many girls could trace their neat writing back to Monica's handwriting classes (using the traditional Marion Richardson system). In her latter Homefield years she was the School's second mistress, until her retirement in 1981.

Monica played a full part in Homefield life, teaching Rounders and Netball, and taking charge of the Nativity Plays in the chapel. She recalls angels wearing pillow cases for dresses and, one year, a child being heavily cloaked in fur to represent a donkey! She also continued to pursue her love of the outdoors when helping the children to complete their Section's Nature Log. In looking back across the years, however, Monica's fondest memories are of the Gilbert and Sullivan plays at BG, when the boys wore make-up and outfits so cleverly designed that parents often wouldn't recognise their own children! During her time at Homefield, Monica was the secretary of the Old Homefieldian Society and spent many hours ensuring the School records were up to date. Many of her old pupils have kept in touch over the years.

Monica is now living in a care home on the outskirts of Rugby and would welcome visits from friends from times past.



If you would like to send in a profile and feature in the newsletter, please email obsociety@biltongrange.co.uk



OB Day always brings a welcome sense of nostalgia as several generations of Old Biltonians and Old Homefieldians convene to celebrate the School and each other's company.

This has been my first OB Day in my new role as Honorary OBS Secretary and, as such, I have truly appreciated the multifaceted nature of the 'day'. The name suggests that it is a one-size-fits-all occasion, whereas, in fact there is a series of well-coordinated events happening consecutively or concurrently. It is becoming more apparent with the passing years that the broadening age range of our collective OBs means that while all aspects of the day are attended, they are not necessarily supported by the same people – and sometimes never the twain shall meet. Many more who are not formally registered for the AGM and lunch attend the afternoon session. All those who attended will have memories from a particular part of the day, but they may not have an overview such as that provided here.



Leading the formal proceedings of the AGM were Tim Day (President), Alex Osiatynski (Headmaster), David Searle (Honorary Secretary) and Jeremy Westhead (Honorary Treasurer). The President made his opening address, welcoming all assembled to the AGM and thanked them for their continuing interest and support. He took a few minutes to reflect and share what the Committee, in conjunction with the School, had been engaged in during the year – more of which later. He also spoke of the possible direction the Society might take in the future, perhaps adopting the name Bilton Society as a more inclusive nomenclature for all its members. The President paid tribute to the Committee for their time and effort in supporting the Society and the School, and thanked the former member of staff, Emily Rycroft, for invaluable services rendered. He then publically thanked the Headmaster for allowing the Society to host OB Day at the School and invited him to take the floor.

Alex Osiatynski noted that it was his fifth time of welcoming back

the OBs and OHs and encouraged them to participate in all the events that the day had to offer. He outlined the successes of the School in the twelve months since being given an Excellent rating from the inspection. He appreciated the ongoing partnership between the School and the Society and publically acknowledged the latter as the lead donor in the Music extension project. The children at Bilton Grange are totally immersed in both curricular and extra-curricular activities and while all are equally celebrated, the academic successes were highlighted, culminating in all the 6th Form leavers gaining access to their chosen senior schools.

Solemn respects were then paid as the names of those who had passed away over the year were read out. It was a poignant moment for Bilton Grange to reflect on the "dreams of the glory of them, who were hers in the days gone by".

Jeremy Westhead, the Honorary Treasurer, presented his annual report and accounts for the OB Society. One of the highlights included the cost of purchasing updated database software – which drives the core of the Society's activity in keeping in touch with OBs and OHs. In the Bilton Song it refers to when "...the web of the world has entwined us..." It is ironic to think that when this song was written there would have been no concept of the Worldwide Web that allows us all to stay connected, even though, they "are gone, long gone". Another significant expenditure, as previously announced by the President, was the Society's commitment to supporting the Music School project with the largest individual donation of over £50,000. The investment returns on the remaining reserves will continue to support the activities of the Society and the School.

Following a nostalgic rendition of The Bilton Song, the Committee and the other attendees joined the congregation at 11:30am in the School Chapel. The service for OBs and OHs was in memory of Michael Munt (OB 1939-1944, Staff 1972-1993) and Alastair Munt (OB 1973-1977, Governor 2006-2007). The service was led by Alex Osiatynski and David Noble, Lay Chaplain. The eulogy by Anthony Day, was a tribute to lasting friendships and a moving evocation of their lives and times.



Emerging from the Chapel, the Society members enjoyed a Pimms Drinks reception before having plenty of opportunities to reminisce over a lingering lunch in the splendid sunshine. With appetites suitably sated, they admired the industry and ingenuity of the Prep pupils setting up their various stalls for the Summer Fair.

While the Summer Fair was in full swing, the Marketing and Admissions team led tours of the School and were regaled with past stories of derring-do and, I suspect, tales of 'derring-don't' too. Mid-afternoon saw the eagerly anticipated OBs XI v The Faders XI Cricket match begin on the Main Square. This event is proving to be a particular draw for younger OBs and was well supported both on and off the pitch. All assembled were treated to both a fine afternoon tea at the Pavilion and an OB victory.

To vie for people's attention and loyalties, on the other side of the School parents and pupils played a Rounders match against a team of OBs. This was a highly entertaining affair for both the players and the large group of spectators alike.

The multifaceted splendour of OB Day requires planning and hard work from the whole Bilton Grange community. Many thanks are due to those who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make the day possible.

I have always attempted to instil in the pupils of Bilton Grange a sense that nostalgia is not just a thing of the past, but will be as

much a part of their future too. As a rather clumsy vehicle to express this, I have attempted to rewrite a section of A. E. Housman's 'A Shropshire Lad' (evidence, if it were needed that I should have my poetic licence revoked):

***In to my heart a healing air that mends,
from yon far school blows:
What are those fond remembered friends,
what games, what dorms are those?
That is the 'Land of Lost Content',
I see it shining plain,
the happy school where I went
and can always come again.***

To every OB and OH, we wish you all health and happiness. Remember, the past cannot be reclaimed but it can be revisited again and again.

David M. Searle
Honorary OBS Secretary



OB Day
22nd June 2019

To book, return the enclosed form or visit: www.biltongrange.co.uk/our-community/ob/events/ob-day-2019/



Events

OB Golf Society (UK Branch) June 2018

The UK branch of the Golf Society met again in June last year. The photo below shows Paul Jackson about to tee off on the 5th hole at Dubai Hills Golf Club during the OBGS day. You are advised to aim for the Burj Khalifa – that small building on the horizon!



Paul Jackson

Informal Drinks



At our annual Informal meeting at Davy's at St James' in Pall Mall we were delighted to see some more new faces once again this year. This is a much anticipated event as it provides the opportunity to catch up with friends, hear their latest news and to put future dates in the diary.



North Entrance gets a Refresh

The North Entrance at Bilton Grange has been the threshold over which many pupils, parents, staff and visitors have started their journey at the School. For many years this main entrance remained unchanged and although warm and welcoming, perhaps had become just a little too well worn.

The start of the Michaelmas term saw the carpet, which had been in place for twelve years, replaced with a navy tartan that complemented the richness of the ornate wood panelling of the North Entrance and Gallery. Although aesthetically this new carpet has added greatly to the look and feel of the North Entrance, a dual purpose is to provide suitable protection for the original tiles that lie beneath. The old carpet had been so worn that it no longer protected the tiles along the well-trodden pathway between the corridor and the Gallery.

Replacing the carpet in the North Entrance had such a positive impact, with approval from all who entered, the only negative being that such a great improvement highlighted other aspects that also needed to be replaced.

The desk in North Entrance had been in a prominent position for over twelve years. With use, wear and changes to the way in which we work, it was no longer suitable for its purpose.

The School researched replacements for the desk, contacting a number of suppliers and furniture makers to determine their solutions and expected costs. After consideration of all of the options, the School appointed Duncan Weaver from Daventry to undertake the project.

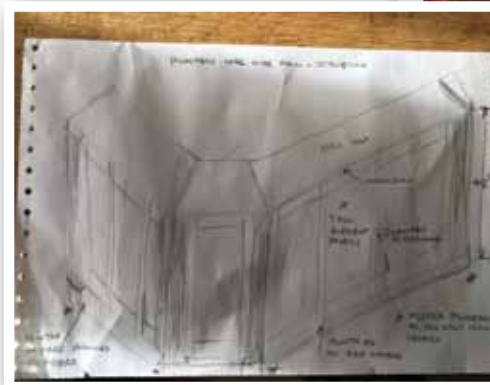
Mr Weaver visited the School to gain a thorough understanding of the craftsmanship already within the building and he was intrigued by the intricacy of the architecture and the woodwork. Carrying these styles into his own designs, he outlined drafts and shared them with the School for consideration.

Mr Weaver decided to create an exact copy of the panelling in the Gallery for the sides of the desk, with a metal inlay of the BG lion to the front. He also designed the plinths to be copies of the cast iron radiator grill plinths.

From his drawings and measurements he created a full size outline of the desk on his workshop floor. Once happy with the design and plans, he self-selected planks of kiln dried oak timber from Whitmore's Timber in Lutterworth, careful to ensure all the planks were from the same log, to get consistency in the grain.

Using traditional woodworking machines, production of the desk began and after five weeks it was ready for delivery.

We are thrilled with our new desk in the North Entrance, it now befits the space it sits in and will no doubt be there for many decades to come.



Guy Ayling (1978—1984) has taken up the role of Head Master at Mount Kelly in April and has shared with us how his experience of Bilton Grange shaped his future, "One of my earliest memories of Bilton Grange is being deeply impressed by the order of a Master's mark book, and thinking that I wanted to have one. I was never really going to be anything other than a teacher and it is only now that I realise how profoundly influenced my career has been by gifted schoolmasters such as Mick Norman, Tony Day and Andy Coker, to name but three. I only hope I have lived up to their example of faith and compassion, and I am enormously grateful to Bilton Grange for what it has given to me."



Guy Ayling and pupils of Mount Kelly

Hamish Brodie (2006—2013) went to Malvern College and thoroughly enjoyed many outdoor pursuits whilst there. Hamish developed a love of climbing and Kayaking and became captain of the Canoe Polo team. In the summer of 2017 Hamish visited Costa Rica with his brother. They travelled coast to coast on foot, mountain bike, kayak and raft in three weeks. This summer they are exploring the rapids of Slovenia for ten days.

Hamish gained A Levels in DT, Geography and Business and is now off to study Agriculture and Farm Management at university.

William Brodie (2006—2013) went to Malvern College and whilst there developed an appetite for outdoor pursuits such as Whitewater Kayaking and Canoe Polo. In 2017 he joined his brother on a trip to Costa Rica and will accompany him on the trip to Slovenia this summer.

William gained A Levels in Geography, Photography and Business and is now off to study Wildlife Conservation and Countryside Management at university.



Jonathon Carr (1966—1971) has just had his first book published, *Make me a City*, in which Chicago's people, landscape and rich history are all woven in to this wonderful tale set in the 1800s on desolate, marshy ground between Lake Michigan and the Illinois River, a man builds a house and a city is born...



Rupert Evans (1984—1989) is currently in Vancouver filming a new American TV show called 'Charmed' which is showing in the UK on E4. Rupert plays an English professor, who happens also to be an Angel. Look closely as you might spot his old Bilton Grange school tie, which he wears in one of the episodes.



Rupert Evans



ONLINE ARCHIVE

Our online photo archive is now live and with almost 1,000 images from 1888 to more recent times, it's well worth a look. Email obsociety@biltongrange.co.uk for the log in details.

David Francis Gray (1936—2018)

(OB 1945—49)

David Gray entered Bilton Grange on VE Day 1945, having previously been at Homefield School.

From the first day, he embraced the spirit of the School and took part in most activities, excelling on the sports field, where he captained both the Rugger XV and Hockey XI. Bilton Grange made a big impression on David and he later served as a Governor for thirty-five years.

Leaving Bilton in 1949, he gained a minor foundationship to Rugby, where he represented the School in both the above games. By now he had decided on a legal career and going up to Trinity College, Oxford, he read law, besides playing Hockey for the Oxford Occasionals and getting around in a 1928 Austin Seven.

After Oxford, he moved to London, where he was admitted a solicitor in 1960. His career advanced when he joined the City law firm of Lovell, White & King, becoming a partner in 1966, the youngest ever partner at the firm. Playing an active role in a number of legal organisations in the City, he was elected Master of the City of London Solicitors' Company in 1984-85. He also served as assistant treasurer of the International Bar Association and trustee of their Educational Trust as well as holding other managerial positions connected with the legal world. He retired in 1993. His interests were not confined to the law and for many years he was also a liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Glaziers.



Apart from his involvement as a governor of Bilton Grange, he was also a trustee of Trinity College, Oxford Society and honorary secretary for almost ten years, reflecting how much he had enjoyed his time at both places and his wish to give something back to them.

David believed in physical exercise from an early age, and for many years was a keen cross-country skier. After giving up Hockey, he had a go at water-skiing, before becoming a keen golfer, a game which he pursued with great enthusiasm. He also kept fit with long walks and swimming.

David enjoyed a wide circle of friends, some of them going back to his contemporaries at Bilton. At the time of his death at Chichester on October 3rd 2018, David Gray was eighty-two years of age. He left two sons and a daughter.

C.J. Gray (OB 1947—52), brother.

John Brian Robertson Vartan (1937—2019)

(OB 1945—1951)

John was a fiercely loyal supporter of Bilton Grange, from his days at the School when he was a fine Hockey player, through his son Andrew and much more recently through his grandchildren Oliver and Georgina. John supported the school in other ways, becoming a governor, a generous donor over the years (the latest being towards the astroturf Hockey pitch — the Vartan-Veit Hockey Tournament bears his name) but also by taking over the Chairmanship of the Neville-Plevins Trust which provides funding for the music department. John loved to visit Bilton Grange and was always delighted to see the developments from his time to the Bilton Grange of today. He was a traditionalist, but knew that the school could not stand still if it was to survive. His kindness, generosity of spirit and his love of Bilton Grange will be greatly missed.

Peter Graham Hurst (1929—2018)

(OB 1938—1943)

Peter was born on November 9th, 1929, in Sale, Cheshire and attended Bilton Grange in the late 1930's. He was known for his many sporting achievements, including either House or School captain, or member of Rugby, Cricket, Gymnastics, Boxing, Hockey and Diving teams. His National service was with the Fleet Air Arm RN, based at HMS Leviathan, a Majestic-class aircraft carrier, launched in 1945. Latterly he was with the Meteorological Department at the Admiralty. He enjoyed a career in Human Resources at ICI, Sellotape (Dickinson Robinson Group) and British Waterways Board, retiring in 1987 to pursue his passion for antiques.

He leaves two sons, seven grandchildren, and one great grand-daughter. He is much loved and fondly remembered by all.

David McClintock Leach (1934—2019)

(OB 1942—1948)

David McClintock Leach joined Bilton Grange in September 1942 and after six years moved on to Sherborne. He maintained connections with the School and as a member of the OB Society attended events when possible. After a long illness he died at home in Irvinghoe on the 28th March; our thoughts are with his family.

We have also been notified that the following OBs have died during the past twelve months:

Tim (TJ) Seabrook (OB 1948—1953)
January 2019

Andy Law (OB 1968—1973)
March 2019

Oliver Pell (OB 1992—2001)
April 2019

Although the war ended in 1918, details of OB casualties continued to emerge well into the following year. The final reckoning included a number of military personnel who had been designated “missing in action” and who now had reluctantly to be presumed dead.

Here, in the last of our short articles featuring OB heroes who died for their country, we include the stories of some of those who lost their lives in the final stages of the conflict.

We also feature preparations made during 1919 to honour the fallen. Some of the monuments to the bravery of OBs can still be seen today.

The extraordinary experiences of John C M Ferguson

John Ferguson was an Assistant Master at Bilton Grange when war broke out in 1914. Keen to offer his services at the earliest opportunity, he enlisted initially as a private, but was soon offered a commission. Stationed near Harwich, he became increasingly frustrated by the authorities’ refusal to send him to the front. It soon emerged that his particular skills as instructor to new recruits had led to his persistent requests to join the fighting being refused.

It wasn’t until April 1917 that he eventually left for France where he soon became involved in some of the heaviest fighting of the war in the neighbourhood of Vimy Ridge. After being wounded in battle, he was appointed Brigade Amusement Officer. Here, too, he showed such skill and natural aptitude that he was soon seen as indispensable, even though he would far rather be with his men at

the front. After such varied experiences, there is some uncertainty about the manner of his death. It is simply reported that he died in Rouen, on November 19th 1918, just a few days after the end of the war. The obituary which followed said of him, “...Captain John Ferguson was an officer of the very finest type because he possessed the gift which makes the real officer – an absolute devotion to the welfare of his men. He gave everything, time, trouble, money, to make them happy and efficient. As a result, they admired him for his courage and physical strength, but they loved him for his goodness....That same character which made him a good officer, made him an ideal Schoolmaster...”

He was known to be greatly looking forward to his return to Bilton Grange, for which preparations were well under way when his unexpected death was reported.

The gallantry of Robin L Mann

Some details finally emerged during 1919 of military personnel who had, at various stages of the conflict, been designated “missing in action”.

One such was Robin Mann, who, after leaving Bilton Grange in 1905, went on to Uppingham and Cambridge before joining the Dragoon Guards.

Stationed in India at the outbreak of war, the regiment sailed immediately for France, where Robin served with distinction. Last seen attempting to carry a wounded brother officer to safety, he was himself struck by a bullet from a German machine gun. Although this incident occurred during the first year of the war, nothing more was heard of him until long after the cessation of hostilities.

The sad neglect of Lieutenant Murray

Anthony Murray left Bilton Grange in 1895 and joined the army at the outbreak of war in 1914. He served with much distinction through many campaigns, surviving until the very final stages of the conflict.

Wounded in the throat by a splinter from an enemy shell, he fell into the hands of the Germans. He was able to walk to a dressing station, where his wounds were attended to. He was then told to walk, unaided, to the nearest German hospital and, after several gruelling miles, he is known to have been picked up by a transport wagon. He was never seen or heard of again, and in the absence of any explanation from the German authorities, his death must be assumed.

The many exploits of Lieutenant Trouton.

Edmund Arthur Trouton left Bilton Grange in 1905 and joined the Inniskilling Fusiliers on the outbreak of war in 1914.

He was a member of the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign where his Battalion was almost wiped out in an attack on the Turkish trenches in 1915. As one of only four officers from an initial compliment of twenty-four to survive, he was invalided out with an attack of dysentery. After his recovery, he next saw action on the Western Front in France where he took part in the “Ulster” Division’s attack on the German stronghold at Thiepval. After an initial breakthrough, Trouton’s platoon came under heavy fire. Although wounded, he was last seen leading his men at the capture of the third German trench. No news was subsequently heard of him and his death was regrettably presumed.



Lieutenant Edmund Arthur Trouton

Honours and Memorials

In 1919, the number of casualties suffered by former pupils of Bilton Grange stood at 148. With the advent of peace, consideration was immediately given as to how to recognise and honour their sacrifice in perpetuity.

The Bilton Record of the time stated: "Many have expressed the wish...that the names of the Old Boys who gave their lives in the War should be handed down to memory and honour in some permanent form to the School."

Thus it was proposed that a memorial be erected in the Chapel "... the central panel of which will bear the names and Regiments of all those who have been killed." Also, "...148 oak chairs should be placed in the Lecture Hall, each chair recording the name of one who gave his life."

The chairs are, alas, no more, but the chapel Roll of Honour will for ever be there for all to see.

Peace Day, Commemoration and Memorial

At 6am on Saturday 19th July 1919, the Peace Day celebrations began. The following description was penned by a reporter simply referred to as a "Young Lady Correspondent."

"Peace Celebrations began with regular bursts of firing and the merry pealing of the Dunchurch bells. After prayers – which were over by 8.15am – the boys marched out on to the lawn where they were drawn up into line by the Instructor, and awaited the hoisting of the Union Jack on the Tower. The flag was saluted and everyone enthusiastically cheered the new Peace."

This was followed in October by a moving ceremony, dedicating the recently completed memorial in the school Chapel:

"To the glory of God and in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I dedicate this work to be a memorial to these, His soldiers and servants. Thus shall their bright and honoured memory be

preserved before God in the hearts of all who worship here, so long as this School shall live and this Chapel stand..."

The High Master of Manchester Grammar School then delivered an address which began with the following words:

"We have met here today in a solemn act of gratitude and dedication to commemorate our school-fellows, our scholars, our sons, our brothers who gave their lives for England. It is altogether fitting that we should meet for this purpose in this place. It was here that they breathed in the spirit which made them so prompt and so willing to answer the great call. It was here that they practised that...spirit of comradeship and leadership, which made them such matchless soldiers; and it was here, above all, that they came and owned that Divine fellowship and inward Presence which did not fail them when they came to "Walk through the valley of the shadow of death."..."

The Bilton Record of the time published a poem entitled "They Fought, They Died, They Live", the first verse of which reads as follows:

***Here stands no dead memorial
The record of some lost event,
To crumble on the Chapel wall
An unconsidered monument;
Sorrow into the dark shall go
And night shut grimly down on pride,
But through the mist of time shall glow
The splendour of these boys who died.***

P.H.B.L

A fitting epitaph for the fallen, and a fitting conclusion to this short series of articles featuring OBs who gave their lives for their country.



The Chapel in 1919



Dates for your Diary

The BG Ball

Saturday 8th June 2019 at 7.30pm

OBs, parents and friends of the School are all welcome at our BG Summer Ball. Tickets cost £80 per person and include a cocktail reception followed by a three course dinner, live entertainment and dancing. To book please email cartwright@biltongrange.co.uk

OB Society AGM and OB Day

Saturday 22nd June 2019

Join us for what will be another great reunion day. A chance to revisit the School, meet old friends and enjoy a game of rounders or cricket. For help in contacting your classmates and arranging a year-group reunion, or to book, please contact Nicola Valentino at obsociety@biltongrange.co.uk

OB Golf Society Event

Sunday 23rd June 2019

This Summer's competition for the ARW Day Trophy will take place on the Sunday immediately after OB Day and is open to everyone — OBs, staff and parents (former and current). For further information please contact Paul Jackson at eajackson22@hotmail.com

Class of 2014 Reunion Dinner

Friday 6th September 2019 at 7pm

Return to Bilton Grange and meet up with old friends before your next adventure begins. If you're off to university, taking a gap year or starting a job, take the opportunity to say

farewell to friends over dinner at Bilton Grange.

To register for this event (which is free of charge) please contact Nicola Valentino at obsociety@biltongrange.co.uk

School Open Morning

Saturday 5th October 2019 at 10.30am

A lovely opportunity for prospective families to come and look at the School, meet current parents and be taken on a tour by our current pupils. Contact registrar@biltongrange.co.uk to register.

Open Morning – Reception to Year 3

Friday 29th November 2019 at 10am

Open Morning is an informal way to have a good look around the Pre-Prep and see what a busy day looks like for our 4-8 year olds. Our pupils will lead your tour and tell you what they love about their School. You'll also be able to meet staff and current parents and find out what they think makes an education here so special. Contact registrar@biltongrange.co.uk to register.

School Open Morning

Saturday 7th March 2020 at 10.30am

A lovely opportunity for prospective families to come and look at the School, meet current parents and be taken on a tour by our current pupils. Contact registrar@biltongrange.co.uk to register.

Informal Drinks, London

Thursday 9th January 2020 at 6.30pm

An annual informal drinks event. Join us from

6.30pm to 8.30pm to celebrate the New Year and catch up on all of the latest news. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for details nearer the time.

OB Hockey Match

Sunday 2nd February 2020

Join us for our annual Hockey match at Bilton Grange. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for details nearer the time.

GDPR Notice

Since a change in the law in May 2018 we are unable to contact you by email unless you opt-in to receive communications in this way. By giving us your permission, you will ensure that we can contact you, keeping you aware of news, developments, fundraising opportunities and events that might be of interest. Stay connected with your peer group, teachers and school by filling in an online consent form at www.biltongrange.co.uk/our-community/ob/update-your-details/consent/ or by completing the enclosed form and returning it to the OB Society, Bilton Grange Preparatory School, Dunchurch, CV22 6QU.

OB Society Committee Members

Tim Day (President)
David Searle (Secretary)
Alex Austin
James Barker
Jane Garland (née Kember)
Millie Garland
Dee Horton (née Summerson)
Paul Jackson
Jocelyn Tysall (née Applegate)
Becky Ukleja
Fiona Willoughby (née Dimbleby)

Editor of the OB Newsletter
Tony Millinger

New OBS Committee Members

If you are interested in joining the Committee, or would like to know more, please contact David Searle, OBS Secretary at obsociety@biltongrange.co.uk

How to get in touch

We are always delighted to hear from our former pupils.

Please contact us on obsociety@biltongrange.co.uk

Bilton Grange
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CV22 6QU

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www.biltongrange.co.uk

[@obsociety](https://www.facebook.com/obsociety) [@biltongrange](https://www.facebook.com/biltongrange)

Further Information

For further information on any of the above events or to register your attendance, please contact 01788 818249 or email obsociety@biltongrange.co.uk

Dates for other events will be notified on the website, via email and on our Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/obsociety