

Westcliff High School for Girls
Old Girls Association NEWSLETTER
2014/15

Date of Next WHOGA Luncheon – Saturday 10th October 2015

See inside for Menu and Order form for tickets.

Please bring your news to the Luncheon or send it to Lesley Woodward, Newsletter Secretary, before February 2016, for insertion into next year's Newsletter.

Raffle prizes for the Annual Luncheon are very welcome
(The money raised from the Raffle goes to the School Hardship fund).

If you have not already given us your email address, we would like to have it so that we can contact you more easily/send you future Newsletters (and save on postage). Please send your email address to Lesley.woodward1@btinternet.com or to one of the Committee, or to pastpupils@whsg.info (see below) or let us have it when you come to the Luncheon.

If you haven't got an email address, could one of your friends receive emails on your behalf, and pass them on to you?

WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS PAST PUPILS

Calling all Past Pupils of Westcliff High School for Girls!

We are trying to update our records so we can send you the occasional email about visiting the school and reuniting with old friends.

Please can you send your email details to pastpupils@whsg.info

Also add WHSG Past Pupil on Facebook!

WHOGA NEWSLETTER 2014/15

Eileen Symington (Macklin) left 1943:

This being my first opportunity to join your annual lunch, I was most impressed, not having been in the school since 1943, and enjoyed the meal and meeting with the "old Girls". It was a lovely afternoon.

Shirley Baker (Philpott) 1948-53:

I was so pleased to attend the lunch this year and meet up with friends **Pauline (Barker)**, **Catharine (Gregson)**, **Ann Mott** and **Margaret (Clover)**. I had a very good year especially in my hobby of writing poetry when I was asked to read on BBC Essex and for 3 months had my own Poetry Corner. My book "Aeolus Ruler of the Winds" did very well and it was a thrill to be asked for a book signing at the "Book Inn" in Leigh-on-Sea. My twin daughters Debbie and Sally got married this year within three months of each other – so that was an exciting and hectic time. A holiday recently in the Pyrenees with my French group provided the finale to a great year.

Ann Leigh 1951-1959:

I'm not sure when I last sent a contribution to the newsletter, so here is an update. I am thoroughly enjoying my flat in Dawlish. I moved from Yorkshire to Devon three years ago. Life is always busy, because I am far more involved with local activities in this little seaside resort than was possible in a very large town like Huddersfield. I can't go out of my front door without immediately bumping into people I know, and I regularly see **Lesley Bate (Costin)** as she worships at the same church as I do. (Lesley was one year below me)

Dawlish has been much in the news since the railway here was badly damaged in February 2014. Lesley and I both live 5 minutes away from the seafront so we have not been affected, but we have been involved in some of the local efforts to help those who were evacuated from their homes. We would assure all readers that Devon and Cornwall are very much open for business, and Dawlish is a wonderful spot to visit on holiday!

Angela Daymond (White) – left 1960:

As it is some time since I left (1960) I have not been tempted to travel from Dorset to the Southend area for the reunion as my contemporaries don't seem to be there. I am still in touch with one old school friend, **Janet Wiles (Wiltshire)**, who now lives in Lincolnshire) and a childhood friend who went to St Bernard's and is still in the area, but if we've visited, it hasn't been at reunion time. I reluctantly left WHSG in 1960 after my mother died and my father moved to London, but I remember how grateful I was that **Hilary James's** mother allowed me to stay with them till the end of term so I could be there a bit longer. On a return visit with our family in the early 1970s, we visited Miss Hughes (Maths teacher) then retired. I had an amazing coincidence locally in Dorset a few years ago – going to the Over 50s Club at our local sports centre, one of the ladies had an accident and broke her wrist. I travelled with her to the hospital and during the long time we were waiting around, found out she went to Westcliff High School 10 years after me! Her name is **Verna** and she's now living in Sherborne, Dorset.

Nancy Poskett-Taylor (Roberts) 1971-78:

First time back at WHSG for the Old Girls Association. Lovely to see old friends, including **Deborah Wooding**, **Liz Hill**, **Catherine Brooks**, **Alison Hills**, **Helen Skinner** and my sister **Vanessa Roberts**. Also really interesting to see the new buildings fitting in with the old.

Brenda Lobar 1952-59:

Still painting, sold one at the Southend Art Club exhibition. Visiting theatres and galleries. **Pat Nissim (Day)** hoped to come, but sadly her husband Nick died suddenly in February. A memorial service was held at St. Mary's, Prittlewell. Pat moved in the summer to Deux-Sevres, North Charentes, France, and is very happy there with her 2 dogs, 3 cats and many visitors.

Lynn Turner (Johnson) was unable to attend due to a prolonged period of ill health. **Gail Grindell (Brownley), Pauline Phillips (Jackson)** and **Jenny Thorogood (Clarke)** drank a toast to Lynn and wished her a speedy recovery. Thanks Lynn for treating us to the wine.

Elizabeth Wheatley (Sharp): (submitted 2014, but received too late for printing in last year's Newsletter): Having been Town Mayor of Godalming for the year 2012/2013, I was invited by the Headmaster to lunch at the school and to present the prizes to the Junior Section in July 2013. As luck would have it, there had been a tremendous accident on the A3 resulting in its taking over 2 hours to reach the Clacket Lane Service Station from Godalming in Surrey. At that point, I thought it sensible to 'make myself comfortable', but being totally unfamiliar with that service station, I managed to come off the motorway early and found myself in the lorry park. Trying to reach the correct area I stupidly lined up on the inside of a very long trailer. As he inched forward, so did I, while we waited for those coming off the M25 who knew where they were going! After a few minutes I suddenly realised there was not going to be enough room for both of us so I stopped and watched this massive trailer gaily drive off having clipped the front of my car and virtually unzipping it - very reminiscent of the ice-berg and the Titanic. I doubt he knew I was there, although I could see his wing mirror!

I made my way through to the correct car park and was very relieved to see a group of young men wearing military fatigues. They turned out to be marines who were kind enough to phone for some black tape, bend my car back into some sort of recognisable shape and paste it up like a parcel. Thus I was able to carry on my way to Westcliff, albeit arriving 20 minutes late. My talk on that occasion was the extra useful qualities one learned at Westcliff High such as flexibility and tenacity...

I had also planned to be with you all for the Old Girls' lunch in October (2013). All was well until somewhere after Clacket Lane, when I suddenly became aware that the steering of my car was feeling very strange. I made it to a tunnel booth where I told the attendant that I thought I had a problem. I was guided to the side, the car bodily removed to the parking area a few yards back and there I stayed for over two hours. Somehow my rear tyre had become gashed both top and bottom - not merely a nice neat little hole! This particular car did not boast a spare wheel, just some stuff that can fill a hole long enough to get the vehicle to a tyre depot. Needless to say the damage was far too much for that. I had been told that help would be coming, but that the car and I would probably have to be taken home and then picked up on Monday to be taken to Guildford where these special tyres could be acquired. After frequent phone calls a truck appeared. He took one look at the tyre and declared that he was not going to take me or the car anywhere. Great, I thought! Fortunately, however, he remembered having a similar problem some time ago and recalled a dealer nearby who was likely to help. We bought the tyre; the chap put it back on the car and, at last I was able to be on my way, unfortunately, though, far too late for the lunch.

When I related to him my previous experience on the M25, he advised me to stay in bed next time I contemplated going along that stretch of road. My husband accompanied me on my next trip, however, and managed to break the jinx! Meanwhile, I have now become Mayor elect for the Borough of Waverley, which is going to necessitate an enormous amount of driving. We have now changed our car, but I shall just have to keep my fingers crossed.

Elizabeth Wheatley (Sharp) (continued -March 2014):

I'm the speech, drama and musical theatre section secretary of Godalming Music Festival and I had my bit over the weekend of 8th and 9th March (2014). This year I had over 500 entries, about 30% up on last year, and I live and breathe the event until a few weeks after it is over, so I'm afraid all else gets left behind. Quite how we're going to cope next year when I am Waverley mayor, I don't know. I have been promised some help, but we shall see...

Elizabeth Wheatley (Sharp) (continued - May 2014):

Just to keep you up-to-date, I thought I had better let you know that I became the Mayor of the Borough of Waverley (in the South West Corner of Surrey) on Tuesday, 13th May. Unusually, I had also been Town Mayor of Godalming for the Jubilee year 2012-2013, which was an immense privilege. Obviously, Waverley is somewhat larger and therefore with even more responsibility. My first duty was to participate in the Silent Toast with the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment which dates back to the battle of Albuhera in 1811. However, these days not just those from that battle are remembered, but any who have fallen in any conflict. 54 of us stood in a circle and passed a loving cup around in total silence. It was very moving. We are being kept pretty busy, but I am looking forward to 2nd June when we have the privilege of attending a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, a treat which was not afforded us while in the Mayoralty of Godalming.

Jane Murphy (Donnithorne - formerly Jane Mennell-Taylor and Jane Foot) 1965-72:

I "retired" from Chase High School in July 2014, where I had been assistant head teacher for a considerable time. In my final years at Chase my work, apart from teaching English to GCSE level, was centred around outreach work to primary schools. My job was to secure confidence that Chase was a viable school of choice for students who needed to choose a secondary school. I was given a magnificent send-off: a whole school session where the head teacher, the wonderful Victoria Overy, and I made speeches and where my film "60 shades of Jane" which reflected my whole educational journey from school through university and professional training and through each of my teaching posts was shown. My husband Mike, a technological wizard, put it together from photos and comments and it evoked both laughter and tears. I spent some time poking fun at myself and my many marriages – which has been a recurring theme for mirth at school.

Chase also hosted a garden party for me where people from every phase of my teaching journey made an appearance. Now I am working as a consultant in 4 separate primary schools where I teach groups of the most able and make sure that their progress in literacy is as rapid and meteoric as possible. For someone who only taught the older classes in secondary it is ironic that I am loving teaching primary students so much.

Rosemary Case (Barnes) 1957-60:

I welcome this opportunity to submit a piece for your Old Girl's News and grateful thanks to my good friends **Lesley Lucas** and **Felicity Goodliffe** for suggesting it. I have many happy memories of my few short years at Westcliff (1957 to 1960) before my family moved out to New Zealand. Miss Rayburn was headmistress whilst I attended the school. One book we studied in English was Charles Reade's *Cloister and the Hearth*. I found this quite heavy going in my teens but now it has become one of my ten favourite books. Some of the teachers who stand out in my mind include our French mademoiselle and our geography teacher. Sadly I no longer remember their names but I have them to thank for a love of languages and travel. Westcliff certainly gave me a good educational grounding and high standards.

Now widowed and residing in New Zealand South Island, I have three married children and six grandchildren living within the Canterbury area. Yes, we all felt the earthquakes in September

2010 and February 2011, plus numerous aftershocks. My second daughter and her husband have only now had their repairs attended to. The rest of the family and myself living some 50 – 100 miles further away, had no significant damage to property.

Life in New Zealand is charming in a different way however whenever I manage to have a trip 'home' I thoroughly enjoy visiting the cathedrals and castles, lovely villages and seaside towns. I have special happy memories of visits to Essex, Sussex, Cornwall, Hampshire, Bath and Berkshire. My very best wishes to the school, teaching staff and pupils. (My younger brother attended Westcliff High School for Boys and now resides in Auckland).

If anyone would like to keep in touch from an Old Girl 'down under', my email is rosecase@kinect.co.nz.

Tina Gowers (Webb) and Sarah Hunt (Saint):

40th Reunion: In July a message popped up on my Facebook page from **Helen Duxbury (Doe)**. She, along with **Gill McGrath (Flynn)**, **Catherine Deeming (Davis)** and **Claire Fennell (Hickey)**, were organising a reunion as it was 40 years ago since we nervously started at new 'Big' school. They had searched Facebook, Friends Reunited and put a note in the local paper to try and let everyone know what they were doing. We were all asked to try and contact those we were still in touch with in the hope of getting as many people along as possible. On Saturday 27th September about 35 of us gathered at The Squeeze Café in Leigh-on-Sea for an evening of excitement, chatter and nostalgia. We didn't have name badges and I lost count of how many times I pointed at someone and said "Ooo, I know the face, who are you?" We were all in the same boat but this meant that striking up a conversation with someone we'd not seen in nearly 35 years (since we left) was much easier. Helen had dug out her old school uniform and there were several photos on show too. I was nervous about going but looking forward to it also. It was great to see so many faces, some still very recognisable, and others not so. Sarah and I stayed for about 2 ½ hours and I don't think I stopped talking. It was brilliant to catch up with everyone.

It was really nice to see **Alison Dufficy (Childs)** whom I had gone to primary school with and also **Linda Milroy (Fenntye)** whom I shared Girls' Brigade camps with. I now have several new Facebook friends and it's a delight to be reunited with them. One thing that Sarah and I heard several times during the evening was "I'd love to look round the school again". We told everyone about the WHOGA lunches and the Westcliff High School website. Sarah and I are really hoping that next year (2015) our numbers will be greatly increased. We would love to see everyone again and the WHOGA lunch is the ideal time to get together, reminisce and to look round the school. If you've not been back since 1979/81 then it will be a real treat. We really, really hope that you come to our next lunch – you won't recognise the place!

Sheila Milbourne:

I was invited to join the company board 4 years ago and then the Group board in January of last year. Currently, I am the only female on the board of a local company which employs over 200 staff and where I have worked for the past 7 and a half years. I am registered at Companies House and am also an FCA Approved Person (Financial Regulation). I have worked in insurance for just over 38 years, studied as a mature student and now specialise in risk and compliance.

I wasn't a high-achiever at school, but the fact that I went to Westcliff High meant that I was selected by the Pru back in 1976 to start a very full and very long career in insurance. My great-niece is now a Westcliff girl in her second year and is far more academic and studious than I was. I hope that she too is set on a great career path when she leaves.

Susan Hance (Mahagan) 1956-62:

In my last 2 contributions to the newsletter I have written about my granddaughter making me very proud. She has returned from her gap year in Uganda determined to return when she finishes her 3 years at uni. My daughter **Helen** (former Westcliff pupil) with her husband and 3 children spent a month in Tanzania with Go MAD (Make A Difference). Among other things they helped to build a water tank and a goat shed for a family. They were able to raise enough money before they went to pay for the tank (including paying for the builders), the goat shed and 2 goats. Having heard their story, I would recommend Go MAD to anyone wanting to have a meaningful holiday!

Helen Boyd (Skinner):

This has been a very interesting year. I stood as a candidate in Blenheim Park ward in the May elections and was UKIP'ed(!). Then my daughter successfully completed her studies at WHSG with good 'A' level results. I completed a long distance ramble (of 270 miles around London) which started in April 2010, and we had good holidays in the south west of England and Paris. I was delighted to be elected to the Chair (of Governors) of WHSG in September and am already busy with meetings.

Lesley Lucas (Byrne):

Berlin Memories Our son and daughter-in-law moved to Berlin in 2010 and since then we have been lucky enough to visit this lovely city a few times. Our daughter-in-law is German but not a Berliner. We have spent the last two Christmases there and have some wonderful memories of the Christmas Markets with the mulled wine and stalls full of beautiful hand-made Christmas decorations. Christmas Eve is a very important part of Christmas there and the shops will only open for a few hours in the morning. After that the city becomes very quiet as everyone is home preparing the evening dinner. On Christmas Eve our son and daughter-in-law cooked us a traditional meal of sausage, potatoes, sauerkraut and red cabbage. On Christmas day we had our first experience of eating goose. This was accompanied with traditional potato dumplings and shredded cabbage.

Travelling round Berlin is very easy and not at all expensive like it is in London. On arrival at Schoenefeld from Southend Airport we buy a travel pass which entitles us to travel on the buses, trams, underground, regional trains and also the 'S' Bahn. We make full use of this and have become very fond of travelling on the trams which come along every few minutes during the daytime and about every fifteen minutes in the evening. They even run on Christmas and Boxing Days. We were very keen to visit the 1936 Olympic Stadium and were not disappointed as it is a magnificent place. Nowadays it is the home of Herthe Berlin football team. There is an O2 venue where we have been to see The Berlin Ice Bears Ice hockey team. Just across the road from the O2 is the East Side Gallery. This is a long section of the Berlin Wall which is still standing and which is now used by artists to paint pictures – many of them political but not all.

Berlin is surrounded by woods and lakes. Just a short tram or train ride and you are in another world. During the summer weekends Berliners head for the lakes, some of which have bathing beaches, one of the nicest being the Wannsee. The New Year is celebrated in a big way in Berlin and the area around the Brandenburg Gate gets very crowded with everyone wanting to see the firework display. On the 31st of December the bakers sell special Pfannkuchen which are the same as our round doughnuts except that they have different fillings like champagne and brandy in addition to the usual jam or apple. We are looking forward to our next visit which will be this summer.

Sian Jenkins (Innes) and Glynis Jayne (Main)

Fifty years have rattled past since our cohort of over 120 girls started at Westcliff. Tracking them down was challenging; they had spread themselves, rather inconsiderately we felt, over all corners of the globe. After painstaking research, we located nearly 60 and with some trepidation, invited them to London for a reunion. After all, most of us had not clapped eyes on each other since 1972. The intervening years would certainly have wrought terrible changes by



way of wrinkles and grey hair. Would we have anything in common now, apart from our senior rail cards? Yet within minutes, 35 Old Girls were chatting away as if the last 43 years had never existed. As well as children and a few grandchildren, we had managed an astonishing array of careers. (Special mention of Ruth Farwell's CBE – she was too

modest to say, but news leaked out anyway). Among us were doctors, lawyers, teachers, accountants, nurses, businesswomen, academics, scientists, musicians, writers and more; achievements in an era when equality was non-existent and ambition was firmly discouraged in Westcliff girls. Most of us remembered the prevailing ethos of “you can't” rather than “you can” and our recollections of school were ambivalent. We had a solid education, but, unlike the boys, we weren't really expected to amount to much. All in all, some mixed memories, but those who attended the reunion experienced an unexpectedly strong bond between us. It was great fun – and weren't we all gorgeous?

Beryl Pither (Campling) 1936-41:

I am sorry that **Muriel Clough (Wren)** died in May. I am in touch with her daughter and husband; the final hymn at her Westcliff memorial service was “Who would true valour see”. I was not able to go as my health is not good at the moment – I'm in my 90th year! I hope the lunch in October will be a success as usual. I have inherited a few interesting items about WHSG, left to the niece of **Mimi Oates**, school secretary in the 1930s, much loved by Miss Wilkinson. The niece is my sister-in-law. Mimi had to leave because she was getting married! I know as well her successor, **Ruby Jaggars**, later **Mair**.

I am a Liveryman (and Freeman) of the City of London and of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers. I became a Freeman in 1967 but at that time very few Companies accepted ladies as Liverymen. It was not until 1996 that I was given the honour of becoming a Liveryman, which entails certain benefits. Even today there are Companies which do not have ladies on their Livery! This year (2014) there is a female Lord Mayor! In 1987 I was elected on to my local Parish Council for 8 years. I was Head of Modern Languages at two schools in which I taught. I am very proud to say that I am a great grandmother to 3 girls and one boy – so far, but this just happens in the family when you have a long life!

Obituaries

Judy Anderson (Allard) 1936 – 2013:

Judy was born and brought up in Leigh-on-Sea in Essex, apart from being evacuated to Berkhamsted during the war. After leaving school she worked as a bacteriologist at the pathology laboratory in Rochford Hospital, training by attending evening classes at the London Hospital. In 1966 she got a job at Unilever Research, Colworth House, got married and moved to what was then a new house in Sharnbrook, Bedfordshire in 1967. This is Unilever's main food research laboratory globally, and employed about 1400 people at that time. She worked there until her retirement in 2001, developing rapid methods for identifying bacteria in food, gaining a patent for this work in 1992. She and her husband Tom subsequently moved after about five years to an old stone cottage nearby in a hamlet called Knotting Green. About another five years later they moved back to Sharnbrook, to provide their parents with somewhere to come and stay with easy access to shops and public transport, as they became too old to drive.

In 2000 she developed cancer and had to have a number of operations and radiotherapy treatment. For about ten years the check-ups proved clear, but then a recurrence occurred which was diagnosed as incurable. With lots of medication she bravely continued as normal as possible until recently when she started to develop frequent bouts of pneumonia. This proved to be the last straw and lead to her untimely death.

She was very keen on sport. Before she was married, and along with her father, they had season tickets for Southend United football club. She also played hockey at school, then for Old Westcliffians (in Southend-on-Sea) and lastly for Parkside (in Bedford) until she was about fifty. In Leigh she was a member of a local sailing club and a keen member of the Girl Guides. Another pastime was singing and she was in the chorus of Leigh Operatic Society productions for many years. After she was married she took up church bellringing at Sharnbrook and serious croquet at Colworth House (Colworth Croquet Club), and Wrest Park (Silsoe, Beds.) an English Heritage property. She keenly participated in both of these until her illness forced her to stop doing them. In the croquet world she became one of the top six lady players in the country. She was also on the national committee, was responsible for expanding the clubs in East Anglia from five to over twenty and the formation of the East Anglian Croquet Federation. She subsequently served as its secretary and development officer for seventeen years, and ran croquet competitions at National Trust houses for many years. With her husband they discovered a national croquet trophy at an antique dealer's house in Sharnbrook, and presented it back to the Croquet Association for use as an award for a national competition. She was also part of Colworth's croquet team which won a national competition in 1983 and 1996.

In bellringing she rang in four peals (each about 3 hours) and 262 quarter peals (each about 45 minutes), and toured Australia's bell towers in 1988. With her husband they donated a new bell for Sharnbrook in 2005. Other sports she enjoyed to a lesser extent were skiing (briefly), tennis and squash. In retirement, with her husband, she joined Northamptonshire Cricket Club and enjoyed going to watch their matches, as well as going to test matches at Lords once a year. Other interests included travelling abroad, visiting Norway, Austria, Holland, Spain, Tunisia, Iceland, Canada, America, and Australia a number of times where she had relations. She is survived by her husband, Tom.

Tom Anderson, husband

Sybil Greenstein:

Sybil Greenstein died on 24 May 2014. She was well-known in the Jewish community - and very involved with local schools and charities.

Tema Elman (Sybil was her husband's aunt)

Bethany Gillard 1990 -1996:

Our daughter Bethany sadly died on 6 October 2014. She was always delighted to receive the newsletter and had very fond memories of her time at the school. She kept a photograph of herself and Pat Elliott taken after her exam results. Bethany had lymphoma when she was at school and remained well for many years but developed a different lymphoma a few years ago and having been told no further treatment was possible in 2010 managed to keep well until a couple of months ago She died peacefully in her sleep at home, which was as she wished.

Linda Gillard

Janice Try (Newham – formerly Edwards) 1948-55:

It is with great sadness that I have to tell you that my beloved wife **Janice Try** died after a short illness on 18 September 2014.

Graham Try

Nancy Howard writes:

Isobel Musson (Wright) has been a member of the Old Girls Committee for at least thirty years. Initially the OGA meeting was held on Saturday afternoons in the old dining room. However, after several poor attendances, culminating in the small ladies' choir outnumbering those attending, it was decided it was time for a change. We thought we would try to hold a lunch in the school hall. This necessitated the Committee carrying tables from all over the school and replacing them afterwards – a tiring task but we were younger in those days! Isobel undertook the task of organising the meal with outside caterers, receiving orders from our members and arranging the seating. This proved a success and Isobel continued to do all the arrangements in successive years.

This practice continued until a few years after my retirement when the new Dining Hall was built and the venue for the meal was transferred there. Although the venue did not have the same ambiance as the main hall, it did mean that tables did not need carrying down any more (much to the Committee's relief). However Isobel continued to do all the arrangements with her usual efficiency and cheerfulness. This she did until last year when she decided to retire.

The OGA owe Isobel a huge debt of gratitude. Her meticulous organisation and planning ensured the smooth running of the lunch for so many years. In the pre-computer time, this involved much paperwork, sometimes causing frustration when members did not send stamped addressed envelopes for replies.

In thanking Isobel for her many years of service involving many hours of work for each lunch, I would also like to include the remaining members of the Committee who also give their time so willingly.

I hope all members of the OGA will share their appreciation by continuing to support our annual reunions in their usual good numbers and look forward to seeing you all on 10th October 2015.

Hylands Extension

This academic year has seen a significant and very welcome extension to the school's Sixth Form accommodation.

In 2013, we made a capital bid for funding towards the construction costs and as the majority of bids received by the DfE are rejected, we were delighted to be told we had been awarded £350,000, to enable a new extension to Hylands to be built. Despite an addition to Hylands House in 1994, our Sixth Form has continued to grow considerably. The old farm house which had once comfortably accommodated the Sixth Form had become too small as the Sixth Form had grown to its current total of about 350 students. The capital bid had emphasised the inadequacies of the current building and the overcrowding in the common rooms. Sir David Amess, our local MP, supported our application and reported back that the school was held in high regard by the DfE.

A planning application to the Local Authority for the demolition of Hylands and the construction of a modern purpose built sixth form block was heard in June 2013 and was approved, so that construction could commence in January 2014 and be completed by the summer term of that year. The plans for the new building were made so it would be complimentary to the West Wing and was designed to provide excellent facilities for students for many years to come.

The cost for the whole project is around £2 million. With the grant from the government plus our own funds we had about half this amount, so it was agreed not to demolish the old house, but to extend it, adding on about half of the planned new build. The current extension is phase 1 of this project and links Hylands by a glass walkway to the Music/Dining Hall block. Phase 2 – the demolition of Hylands and the completion of the project – will be dependent upon future Government funding.



Despite some very wet winter weather and rapid alterations to the design of the foundations to accommodate the high water table, the new building was completed in August. There have also been some alterations to the inside of Hylands to widen a corridor and provide toilets for the boys in our Sixth Form as well as a toilet with disabled access.

We were delighted to open the doors of our new Sixth Form Block to Year 12 and Year 13 students in September 2014. It becomes one of the largest academic Sixth Forms in the area, having two large common rooms, quiet study areas and an air conditioned IT facility as well as WiFi throughout. Students now have first rate accommodation with kitchens fitted with dishwashers, microwaves and fridges. Each common room has a coffee bar and is bright and airy overlooking 'The Orchard'. We have now added greater security to the site by issuing cards to each student which operate scanned locks to the main doors and to the link with Music. A new office has been created for the Pastoral Support Co-ordinator on the first floor and the Head of Sixth Form occupies the old 'Careers Library' on the ground floor. As part of our 'sustainability initiatives' the new building has air-source heat pumps to supplement its heating.



As well as providing excellent accommodation for our current students we have used the building for many other events such as Enterprise Days, Speakers for Activity Days and Parents' Evenings. We firmly believe that these changes have greatly enhanced the learning

experience for our Sixth Form students and have provided a building which not only looks impressive but matches well the recent building developments on the other side of the road.

Dr Paul Hayman

The Funding Challenge for High Performing Schools

You may have seen articles in the press (or read some of my letters to parents of pupils at the school) about the difficulties we face through a squeeze on our funding. In this article I explain the background to the issue and how we are responding to it.

Background

Westcliff High School for Girls is the lowest funded secondary school in Southend on Sea. Over a period of 5 years (starting in 2012) the school's funding is reducing by £870k – that's a 16% cut. Schools with the lowest income are feeling this reduction most as they have the least 'spare funding capacity'.

Why is funding being reduced?

In the period 2012 - 2017 the money provided by the Education Funding Agency to pay for the education of our pupils is being reduced by £631,000. This is largely due to a significant reduction in the funding for our Sixth Form students. On top of this we have unfunded nationally agreed pay rises, unfunded nationally implemented increases in employer pension contributions and the need to reward our staff for the work they do and their success in helping the students to achieve (also unfunded).

How are funds allocated to schools?

The mechanism for funding schools is made up from:

- A base per pupil figure (a)
- A variety of locally agreed top ups (b)
- Pupil Premium (c)
- Funding for Special Needs (I won't include this in our explanation as it is always specific to each individual pupil)

(a) This is about £4500 per secondary school pupil

(b) These locally agreed top ups (set by local councillors using advice from the Local Authority Schools' Funding Forum) cover areas such as:

- The number of pupils qualifying for Free School Meals
- The number of pupils who underachieved while at primary school
- The number of pupils attending the school from economically deprived parts of the community (as defined by post-codes)
- The number of pupils needing support for English as it's not their first language

(c) Pupil Premium is a nationally set figure. It is given to schools to support any pupil who has been on Free School Meals in the past 6 years (sometimes we call this funding 'Ever 6'), pupils who have been in care and pupils who have a parent serving in the armed forces.

Adding the three parts of the funding together (a+b+c) can create a difference in funding of up to 60% per pupil in the school, eg WHSG gets an average of £4535 per pupil whilst a school 3 miles away gets an average of £7250 per pupil.

Our Response

We have a duty to balance our budget and try to live within our means.

In a school such as ours the largest proportion of our budget is staffing costs; to balance the budget we will see a reduction in our staffing levels. Over the next few years we will have fewer teachers and fewer support staff.

To manage the situation so far we have:

- Increased the teacher class contact time to its maximum capacity - reducing their availability for support work and adding to their planning, preparation and marking load
- significantly reduced our school maintenance programme
- severely rationed our allowances for printing
- reviewed all our contracts to see where savings can be made
- significantly cut departmental allowances
- reduced the number of support staff

and, from September 2015 we will also:

- Increase class sizes in Years 7-11
- Remove of one option choice for GCSE courses, so pupils will take one less GCSE
- Give pupils less choice of subjects to study to GCSE
- Employ 5 less teachers.

Some of these cuts that we are making are unsustainable and we will have to make savings elsewhere to bring back expenditure in those areas to at least a minimum required level.

In addition the school's Governing Body had agreed to expand our entry into Year 7 to 184 pupils. As a result we now have 184 pupils in Year 7 but the increased DfE funding this will trigger will not emerge until the start of the following academic year. The Governing Body has agreed this expansion will also occur in 2015; we are confident we can accommodate and resource these two years of extra pupils, but for this to continue, we will need to secure funding from the government to provide extra accommodation.

How are we campaigning about this issue?

We have been raising our case for improvements to our budget with School s' Forum (the local body that recommended how school funds are distributed), local MPs, the Education Funding Agency and the Secretary of State for Education. There have been petitions and many parents took part in a recent postcard campaign by sending postcards to their local MP, the school's local MP (Sir David Amess), the Secretary of State for Education and the Prime Minister.

Despite these cuts we are still trying to maintain a full education experience that includes lessons, educational trips, sporting activities, drama, dance, support for local charities and a wide range of clubs and societies.

Dr Paul Hayman

Committee Changes

We have recently had several changes on the OGA Committee:-

Isobel Musson (Wright) had to step down last summer, due to ill health – her many years' service to the Old Girls and especially in connection with the annual lunch are most appreciated.

In her place we have 2 new members: **Sarah Mismar (Baron)** and **Lisa Clarke (Dixon)**, who will be taking over the main organisation of the annual Lunch.

Jane Whittington (Jarrett) has also has to step down due to pressure of work. The Committee would like to thank Jane for her work on the Committee.

Tina Gowers (Webb) has kindly offered to take Jane's place on the Committee.

Lesley Woodward (Ogden), Newsletter Secretary

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

President:	Dr Paul Hayman	<i>Headteacher, Westcliff High School for Girls, Kenilworth Gardens, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 0BS</i>
Vice Presidents:	Pat Elliott	
	Nancy Howard OBE	<i>17 Seabrink Undercliff Gardens, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 1EA</i>
Treasurer:	Sarah Hunt	<i>237 Eastwood Road North, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 4ND Sarahhunt17@aol.com</i>
Lunch Co-ordinators:	Sarah Mismar	<i>49 Thames Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 2XQ sarah.e.baron@googlemail.com</i>
	<i>and</i>	Lisa Clarke
Membership/Minutes Secretary:	Helen Boyd	<i>36 Kenilworth Gardens Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 0BH helenboyd27@gmail.com</i>
Newsletter Secretary:	Lesley Woodward	<i>190 Bournemouth Park Road Southend-on-Sea, SS2 5LU lesley.woodward1@btinternet.com</i>
General Administrators:	Anne Rickard Lesley Wilkins Tina Gowers	

Note to all Committee Members:

The next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 22nd September 2015 at 6.00 pm at the School. Please try to attend, to help with the final arrangements for this year's Luncheon.

Raffle Prizes for the Annual Luncheon

Old Girls who have been to the Luncheon before will know that we always have a raffle on the day. The money goes to the School Hardship Fund which has been very supportive to many girls in the past. **Raffle prizes are very welcome, thank you.**

Westcliff High School for Girls – Newsletter

Keep in touch with what's happening at Westcliff High School for Girls by accessing the school's Newsletter via the website: www.whsg.info → Extracurricular → Past Pupils.

Westcliff High School for Girls - Past Pupils

We try to keep past pupils informed about events via the WHSG Past Pupils' Facebook page and love to hear news from former WHSG students. In addition to keeping our contact database up to date, WHSG also likes to keep track of the education and career history of our former students, occasionally inviting past pupils to speak at school events or to support career days. If you would like to help in this way, please email to pastpupils@whsg.info.

WHOGA Luncheon 2014

List of attendees – Current names first

Peggy Adams (Renwick)	Stephanie Andrews (Pyne)	Gillian Azulay (Lane)
Chris Baker (Harvey)	Shirley Baker (Philpott)	Margaret Barnes (Clover)
Ann Boulter	Helen Boyd (Skinner)	Shirley Bradley (Prentice)
Jo Brockis	Eileen Burzynska (Greaves)	Jacqueline Carter (Storey)
Norma Chandler (Evans)	Christine Dean (Moses)	Lisa Clarke (Dixon)
Anne Cornell (Martin)	Loretta De Haan (Franks)	Pauline Devereux (Bates)
Catherine Diani (Gregson)	Janice Faint (Williams)	Nareen Foley (Crumpler)
Marilyn Goodman	Derry Gordon (White)	Tina Gowers (Webb)
Gail Grindell (Brownley)	Anne Hague (Whatley)	Janice Harris (Browning)
Christine Hawes (McAvoy)	Dr Paul Hayman	Liz Hill
Alison Hills	Alison Holmes (Miller)	Nancy Howard, OBE
Sarah Hunt (Saint)	Annette Jordan (Rayner)	Patricia Kenny (Tomkins)
Jennifer Lawler (Philpotts)	Margaret Lawson (Wyatt)	Susan Layzell (Gallacher)
Hilary Le Marie (Gothard)	Josephine Lennox (Hall)	Margaret Lewin (Austen)
Jenny Lewis (Morris)	Sheila Leys (Clarke)	Brenda Lobar
Margaret Lockhart	Susan Mahagan (Hance)	Clare Mann (Stoneman)
Gina Mills (Manton)	Sarah Mismar (Baron)	Maxine Moorhouse (Martin)
Helen Morgan (Catton)	Valerie Morgan (Bone)	Rosemarie Morgan-Barry (Sage)
Alison Morrison (Clarke)	Lauren Morrison	Ann Mott
Jane Murphy (Donnithorne)	Deborah Neale (Wooding)	Catherine Negus (Brooks)
Laura Nichols	Theresa Philips	Hilary Phillippo (Field)
Pauline Phillips (Jackson)	Christine Pocock (Allen)	Nancy Poskett-Taylor (Roberts)
Susan Price (Abbott)	Carol Protherough (Mills)	Dawn Pyne (Tyler)
Rosemary Raines (Hall)	Carol Reeve	Audrey Regan (Sterne)
Pamela Regan (Summers)	Jill Richard (Clifton)	Anne Rickard (Turner)
Dorothy Rickard	Vanessa Robinson (Roberts)	Joy Sawkins (Hartley)
Jill Scott (Brownley)	Sally Shenton	Anne Sorrell (Gregory)
Maggie Stannard (McDonnell)	Eileen Symington(Macklin)	Pauline Taylor (Barker)
Gill Thomas (Newman)	Jennifer Thorogood (Clarke)	Doris Underwood (Mather)
Jean Walker (Havens)	Sheila Webb (Milbourne)	Marjorie Whyberd (Page)
Lesley Wilkins (Wood)	Martin Wilkins	Heather Williamson (Garnett)
Linda Wines (Morris)	Lesley Woodward (Ogden)	

SATURDAY 10th October 2015

12.00pm – 5.00pm

MENU

Homemade Butternut Squash Soup

OR

Poached fresh Scottish Salmon, Leaf Spinach and Dill Fishcakes with a Lemon Pepper Mayonnaise served on a bed of mixed Salad Leaves

OR

Warm Tartlet of Roast Tomato, Basil and Mature Cheddar served on crisp Salad with a homemade Onion Chutney

Pot Roast of Chicken with bacon, roast button onions and Coq au Vin Sauce, Baby Roast Potatoes and a medley of seasonal vegetables

OR

Roast Rump of Lamb with a tapenade and herb crust, Rosemary gravy, Dauphinoise potato

OR

Grilled Sea Bass fillet served with Balsamic Reduction and Olive Oil on a bed of mixed leaves

OR

Vegetarian alternative:

Baked red pepper filled with a fine ratatouille topped with mozzarella cheese

Potatoes and Seasonal Vegetables, Roll & Butter

Marbled Strawberry and Cream Cheesecake served with Vanilla Cream

OR

Triple Chocolate Dessert – Layers of Rich Chocolate Sponge, Creamy Chocolate Mousse and Dark Chocolate Topping served with Clotted Cream

OR

Traditional Sugar Crusted Crème Brûlée served with Hedgerow Fruits and Vanilla Pod Ice Cream

Coffee or Tea

Cost **£18.00**

DRINKS

Wine and soft drinks will be on sale as usual

Please choose 1 Starter, 1 Main Course and 1 Dessert and mark your choices clearly on the booking form.

A raffle ticket will be stapled to the tickets of those having a vegetarian meal – please bring this with you.

Please bring some change with you if you wish to buy a drink (It's difficult to deal with too many £10 or £20 notes, especially early in the event).

Please wear your 'House badge' if you have one, or you can order one (see booking form).

WHOGA 2015 – ANNUAL LUNCHEON – Saturday 10th October 2015
12 for 12.30 pm

Name (at school)..... (Name now)

School years Email address:

Please seat me on the same table as
(Name of school friend(s))

I would like to order (at a cost of £18 per head):

Please tick the relevant box

<u>Starters</u>	Butternut Squash Soup	
	Poached Salmon	
	Tomato Tartlet	
<u>Main Courses:</u>	Pot Roast of Chicken	
	Roast Lamb	
	Grilled Sea Bass	
	<u>Vegetarian –</u> Baked Red Pepper	
<u>Desserts:</u>	Strawberry & Cream Cheesecake	
	Triple Chocolate Dessert	
	Crème Brûlée	

Checklist:-

I enclose a cheque for £..... (made payable to W.H.O.G.A.)	
<u>I enclose a self-addressed and stamped envelope</u> (Very Important)	

Please send the cheque (payable to W.H.O.G.A.) **and stamped addressed envelope** to:-

Sarah Mismar, 49 Thames Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 2XQ

I wish to **order** a 'House Badge' for (name of 'House')
costing **£2** (payable at the lunch)

Please apply by 17th September 2015