

**Westcliff High School for Girls**  
**Old Girls Association NEWSLETTER**  
**2015/16**

Date of Next WHOGA Luncheon – Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016

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 2017,  
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](mailto:Lesley.woodward1@btinternet.com) or to one of the Committee, or to  
[pastpupils@whsg.info](mailto: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](mailto:pastpupils@whsg.info)

Also add WHSG Past Pupil on Facebook!

## WHOGA NEWSLETTER 2015/16

**Betty Eunson:** 1938-43:

On leaving (WHS) in 1943 I went to Bedford College for Women, London University to study French. The Headmistress, Miss Wilkinson, did not approve – at the time WHS focused on entrance to Newnham College, Cambridge and Holloway, London University. I was ill at the time of the Cambridge exam and instead sat the inter-collegiate exam to gain entry to one of the six colleges at London University. It was a far more difficult exam than the Cambridge entrance.

I always wanted to study German but never had the opportunity. I joined WHS mid-year when my family moved from Edinburgh and was not allowed to start German, and then I was ill with Scarlet Fever and missed the first weeks of the Sixth Form so was unable to take up this subject at that time. When I entered Bedford to read French I opted to take German as a subsidiary language, but because of the war the course was reduced to 2 years, not deemed long enough to achieve the required standard; I studied Italian instead.

During my final year at Bedford I sent out many job applications and was encouraged by a fellow commuter to apply to the British Aluminium Company. There were no jobs available but they confirmed they would hold my details on file. I was passing their offices one day and on the off chance went in to see if there was any news. I learned that their librarian was going on maternity leave and was asked whether I would like to be interviewed for the role. It was not a career I had envisaged yet I went on to become a Librarian Associate. I was, however, able to keep my languages going when the company entertained visiting European dignitaries.

I contracted TB and pneumonia a while later and was seriously ill for several years resulting in having one of my lungs removed. As part of my rehabilitation I took a shorthand/typing course – it was a strange experience for me sitting down with 15/16 year old girls, learning new skills.

I started to work for Marconi at its Foulness site and was employed as their Librarian. Up until my arrival all reference books and journals were housed in filing cabinets or bundled into cupboards. It was an exciting experience to start a library from scratch in a brand new building. I very much enjoyed working at Marconi and also made good use of my Italian.

After my retirement I was keen to keep busy and was invited to become a Governor at WHS. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to give something back to the school where I had many happy memories.

**Cicely Dow (Millbank)** (Always known as Jean): 1939-

I started (at WHS) with a scholarship from my school in North Shoebury in October 1939 (it was fee paying and I had to take an entrance exam). I was brought up on an isolated farm outside Shoebury, near to Wakering. It took an hour to get to school, walk to take the bus to Southend and then the trolley, I think, to near the school along the unmade road up to the boys' school. We were not allowed to go that shorter way, but eventually, because we had such a long journey we few were allowed to walk up the road beside it i.e. not the boy's way!! In May before Dunkirk the school was evacuated to Chapel en le Frith in Derbyshire. My brother was just 6 and my mother would not let him go and his education suffered terribly as there was only a private poor quality school left.

It might amuse you to know that Wakering received evacuees throughout the war and the school remained open there. This was due to real organisational chaos and we now know that few evacuation reception areas were warned, the first they knew was when the train stopped!

Also no-one wanted evacuees. I was to go with a friend's child from near us. This meant we had to sleep on a hall floor for 3 nights whilst people viewed us. Eventually we were billeted with a lady, who, though kind, was of dubious activity. After a week the vicar moved us to a horrid family who were psychologically cruel to us. I did not write to tell my family as I knew my future depended on my education. My friend told her father and he came and took her away. They then moved me to an old couple who were so kind to me and I kept in contact with them afterwards. After some weeks we then attended a big house at the top of Coombe Moss. The bus took us to the bottom of the hill and we had to climb up the drive to the top. It was very stony. In the winter a girl was running down the hill after school, to catch the bus, and she fell. She was killed fracturing her skull and the bus was made to go up the hill, only occasionally being unable because of frost/ snow.

I can never exactly remember when we came back, but it was before we took the school certificate. The playing fields needed a lot of repair but eventually were ready. I was very athletic and played a lot of hockey, but little opportunity for tennis. Miss Wilkinson, the Head Mistress was wonderful, an inspiration for us all. A lot of girls got into medicine. I was Deputy Head girl. I got a Major County scholarship and went first to King's College, London, and after 2nd M.B. I went to St George's in London, admitting women for the first time. You know I decided on medicine as it was the ONLY job in which you were paid the same as men!! Mind you I was not to know that there were very few job opportunities for women, however many prizes and honours you got. It was unusual to get a prime job in a teaching hospital because a consultant could refuse to take women, particularly in London. For instance, in Wimbledon when I married, no GPs would take women. You were only welcomed in the East End and poor areas! I became a radiologist after a 10-year break, after 4 children (very difficult to learn again a lot of what we had forgotten: our minds had lost the ability to concentrate.)

Finally, one thing I should mention, when we came back to Westcliff a girl joined us who must have been a refugee. She lived with a foster family near to Miss Wilkinson. She was clever because she went to Cambridge. None of us were told anything about her background and it was obviously tragic, but we had no idea. I often worried about how she fared. Her name I always remember, was Renee Halhn. (I may not have spelt her surname properly.)

*Newsletter Secretary's Note: **Does anyone remember Renee?***

### **Marilyn Goodman 1947-54:**

For the last 11 years I have been the volunteer receptionist of the Southend Leg Club. The Lindsey Leg Club Foundation operates all over the country, but we are one of only two in Essex. The Clubs are drop-in centres for people with lower leg problems, particularly leg ulcers. The idea is that they receive treatment from nurses specially trained in these problems, but in a social environment as opposed to a clinic. So we provide free tea, coffee and cake through the afternoon (every Tuesday 1.00 – 4.00 at the Salvation Army Hall in Frobisher Way, Shoebury) and Club members can chat with their peers, play table games such as Scrabble or chess, sit and read or whatever they want to do while they wait their turn for treatment.

We organise various events through the year – a Christmas lunch, a birthday party in May, a cream tea in August – also fundraising events such as quiz nights and boot sales. Profits from these help with the cost of weekly refreshments, the hall rent and also enable us to purchase extra items of equipment to help the nurses which are not provided by SEPT (South Essex Partnership NHS Trust). There is a very friendly atmosphere between the volunteers and the Club members. Some of them stay the whole afternoon, some come back for a chat and a cuppa even if their leg is healed. Over the 11 years I have met more than 400 people. Luckily they do not all come in on a Tuesday afternoon!

**Shirley Baker (Philpott) 1948-53:**

I have had a good year. A lovely holiday in April in Prague with my husband and 2 daughters and a 1-month cruise on our ancient sailing boat Aeolus, in which we sailed round the East Coast rivers. My book Aeolus, Ruler of the Winds, has proved very popular and thanks to my school friends for purchasing a copy. It has now achieved a second reprint so I am pleased to see it doing well. Writing poetry is my hobby and I have been invited to read at many venues throughout Essex including the Cramphorn Theatre at Chelmsford for the Essex Poetry Festival. For the past 2 years I was honoured to be the Resident Poet of BBC Essex. So all in all am still doing well.

**Pauline Taylor (Barker) 1948-56:**

I am enjoying my retirement. Although I have finished my acting days with the Ipswich Operatic Society and Stowmarket Operatic and Dramatic Society, I am now on the auditioning committee which provides me with plenty of interest and good contact with the theatrical world. It is always a pleasure to come to the W.H.S.G. annual lunch when I am able to meet my friends, including **Shirley Baker (Philpott)**.

**Ann Mott 1948-1954:**

As we were preparing to leave school at the end of the Sixth Form we spent those last weeks reminiscing nostalgically, unwinding and, above all, rehearsing for the Sixth Form play, which was performed on the day before breaking-up day. In those days, the characters sometimes had to light cigarettes, which caused a frisson through the audience. I don't remember many puffs, however. A rip-roaring comedy was always chosen, but one year the girls wrote a series of episodes based on TV programmes, but combining them with school activities. In one, a TV detective was prosecuting a science mistress for teaching the senior girls how to make whiskey. Her defence was that it was sold in aid of Save the Children. The actress gave a perfect impersonation of one of the science mistresses, shuffling along with head poking forward, benign smile, old-fashioned clothes and Clarks' sandals.

I was an OG by then, but their dress rehearsals took place on the previous evening, and we had our summer meeting then, making an audience. This episode, and other references to staff, brought the house down. At that time (1964) there were still quite a few mistresses who had been at the school since the 30s and 40s so we could recognise the references and impersonations.

Back to our final day: after all that fun came the tears at assembly. Of course, it was so much more cohesive having all the school together in the hall. The Upper Sixth sat at the back under the gallery, so we were able to hide our faces. In the afternoon we all met in the hall again. Cups were handed to the winning houses, and we were told, often for the first time, of staff departures. One year Miss Raeburn was making an announcements that "Miss ..... was leaving to become ....", then paused for a moment and added, "married". The applause thundered out, the teacher must have been nearly 40 and she'd found a husband! In those days, you were on the shelf for good if you weren't at least engaged in your mid-twenties.

At the end of the assembly we sang the school song and everyone went, except for the leavers. The third year Sixth Formers had recently disclosed that we were to bring a few bits to eat, and when all was quiet they would guide us to the roof, on which we would sit and eat. Then at last we left through the front door, pupils no longer. We'd all joined the OGs.

**Patricia Nissim (Day) 1952-59:**

I am sorry I can't make the reunion this year, it coincides with a family celebration. **Brenda Lobar** and I exchange letters, so she should know how I am getting on. I live in Deux-Sevres, now, scenery a bit like Essex, very flat, so no mountains or wolves! I have good friends and neighbours here, plus a beautiful garden, which is much appreciated by my 3 cats and 2 dogs. I have lots of lovely visitors, family and friends. I promise I shall try to come next year.

**Elizabeth Wheatley (Sharp) 1958-65:**

Towards the end of August 2014, I had the privilege, as Mayor of the Borough of Waverley, to take the salute at Dunsford's Wings and Wheels of the Tigers, the sky-dive parachute team of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. One of the young soldiers challenged me to a tandem jump. At first I tried to laugh it off saying I thought I was too old, but when he told me they took people up into their 80s, I knew I couldn't argue. I had been doing a lot of fundraising for my chosen charity, Citizens Advice Waverley, so I decided, if I was going to be mad enough to do this thing, then it had to be for something special. The ward I represent is one of the more deprived areas of 'leafy' Surrey and I learned that they dearly wanted a community building. I therefore agreed to 'jump' start that fund by accepting the challenge. However, as I was standing for election in May, I was not allowed to jump until after election day, in case I was thought to be trying to influence the electorate. This meant my going to Germany to the team's base near Bad Lippspringe just two weeks before I came out of office.

A charming sergeant was assigned to look after me. The only problem was that a group of single soldiers were due to do their jumps first – and one got lost! I learned the next day that he had probably blacked out on the way out of the aircraft. Although his parachute had been deployed, he was obviously not controlling it – and ended up in a tree! We arrived on base about 10 in the morning and had to wait until this young man was found, dealt with and the support teams were back on base before we were allowed to leave for our jump. It got to 1.10pm and I began to wonder whether it was going to be like those hospital stories one hears about, where people have their pre-meds, are trundled towards the operating theatre and then told they are out of time! Fortunately, at that moment dear Simon yelled to me: "We're off, Liz". My husband, Mike, had been invited into the cockpit by the pilot, so he was going to be in his element.

At Dunsford the demonstration jump had been from 2,000 feet, however, we left the aircraft at 13,200 feet. Another three young soldiers did their solo jumps, then the cameraman edged his way out and perched on a ledge at the side of the door. I was well strapped to Simon and we had to shuffle on our backsides towards the open door. He told me categorically not to look down, but to smile at the cameraman so people could see that I was not a stunt-double. As Simon pushed off from the plane we started off speeding head-first. Then I remembered to pull my head back, to cross my legs behind and try to arch my back as much as possible. My thumbs were already in webbing loops across my chest. Once Simon was happy with our position, he tapped me on the shoulder as a sign for me to stretch out my arms in classic free-fall manner. We apparently flew for 50 seconds, reaching a speed of 165 mph before the parachute was deployed. At one stage we were approaching a fluffy white cumulus cloud and I wondered what it would feel like. It was therefore almost disappointing not even to notice any sensation of damp, but I waved the cameraman farewell, as he disappeared into the mist.

The worst bit was when the parachute was used. Obviously, it was comforting that all was well, but that sudden surge upwards was very unpleasant. Funnily enough, it was only while under the canopy that I felt slightly queasy. Simon offered me joint control of the parachute and even suggested our pulling the handles down hard, so we could travel down that much faster, to which I replied "let's not bother ...." We made a perfect landing and, as a result, I managed

to get £2,500.00 to start up the community building fund. I am extremely grateful to my lovely Tigers for allowing my jump to happen – but it is not something I would line up to do again in a hurry.

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

Memories of Westcliff High:-

- Inter House Drama competition – always a highlight of the year. Originally judged by Peggy Batchelor of Ridley Studios.
- The magical times when staff acted totally out of character at special end of term events. Miss Clarke's amazing impersonation of Donovan, singing "Mellow Yellow", wearing a beige trouser suit made of corduroy, complete with a peaked cap, sticks in my mind.
- The fact that Eastwood Boulevard was "out of bounds", because of the bushes and the fear of sexual activity, made it completely irresistible.
- School dances held at the boy's school. The band "Late Night Love" was originally banned as Miss Raeburn thought that it seemed to be an invitation for all kinds of inappropriate frolics.
- The incinerator in the basement was continually deliberately blocked by students and the ensuing smoke would choke not only the basement but would clog the whole of the ground floor.
- Standing "under the clock" for many offences. The one time I was sent there I ducked down when Miss Raeburn came out of her room and pretended to be tying my shoelaces.
- The band "Sweet" playing at our dances and singing "Hush" and Karen Hughes happening upon them in their underwear as they were changing before their performance.

**Anne M Box 1963-70:**

Great to meet up with everyone at the reunion. I continue to sing with Southend Bach Choir and shall enjoy singing in Messiah at Westcliff High for Boys in December. I attended a singing school at Warwick University in the summer and sang Brahms Mass in Coventry Cathedral. This year I have visited Jersey, Lake District and went on a sleeper right up to Inverness in Scotland to visit friends. It is always interesting to see how the school projects are progressing. I brought my old cookery and domestic science aprons to show people, which appeared to give interest and reminded us of old teachers, Miss Stuart and Mrs Freeman. I was pleased that Devereux was awarded the overall cup. Thank you for arranging the lunch.

**Helen Boyd (Skinner) 1971-78:**

Quite a memorable year! My son Liam graduated and went on to study for a Masters at the University of Gothenburg. My daughter Laura started a degree in Creative Design at the London College of Fashion. I enjoyed 3 holidays – Rome with my husband Dave, Majorca with Laura, a wet walking holiday in the Isle of Wight, and a trip to Sweden - not really a holiday as we were finding Liam somewhere to live. He ended up on an island called Vrangö. Looking forward to a long weekend in Berlin at the end of October and, of course, more involvement with Westcliff Girls.

**Kay Gibb (Seabrook) 1973-80:**

Still married to Christopher, ex WHSB and Felsted. My older daughter Julia left WHSG in 2014. She is now in her 2<sup>nd</sup> year at Exeter Medical School and is **absolutely loving** it. She has already been on several clinical attachments – giving flu jabs in a GP surgery and suturing a skin graft in a dermatology operation on a skin cancer patient. My younger daughter has just started her A levels at SEEVIC. I still work part-time as an ultrasonographer (radiographer specialising in ultrasound scanning).

**Carol Carlile (Webb) 1973-78:**

Enjoyed lunch after several years' absence; encouraged to attend as our daughter (Hannah Carlile) has just started in Lower Sixth. She will be studying Science, following in the footsteps of her father's ancestor, Caroline Herschel, commemorated in one of the new science rooms. I hope she will enjoy the school and learn to sing "Pilgrim" too.

**Debbie Skeels (Pyne) 1973-78:**

I married an ex- Isle of Man TT racer in 1983. Currently with a painter and decorator (and, yes, my house does need painting!) No children, but we have six chickens and plenty of eggs...! From 1993 – 2000 did six years in the TA – Royal Signals in Southend and Grays. In 2003 I went to South East Essex College of Arts & Technology (SEECAT) and did an evening class in Music Technology which I passed and which gave me the option to do a full-time HND in Music Production, from which I graduated in 2006. Currently working full-time for the MoD and making jewellery in my spare time.

**Stella Wallace (Dobson) 1985-92:**

There was an informal reunion of quite a few of the girls from my year last week (*Aug 2015*), which I was unable to attend, but via Facebook one of the organisers gave information regarding the website for the school and the links to the WHOGA page, so I am excited to be able to join (the OGA)! I passed my 11+ in 1985 and was at Westcliff from September 1985 till July 1992. We had classes P, Q, R and S in my year and I was in Q. Miss Howard was the Head and was a very scary lady! I was scared of her right up until I had to do my assembly reading when I was in the Lower Sixth - which was school year 1990/1. I think it was Miss Howard's last year as Head before her retirement. Anyway, we all had to do an assembly reading in the Lower 6th and we would have to go to Miss Howard's office to collect it a few days before our allocated day of reading. I remember nervously knocking on her office door (a magnificent room as I recall!) and when she handed me my reading, it was a very long one from the Bible (but for the life of me, I can't remember what it was!) and I remember exclaiming, 'oh no it's a really long one!' and then hastily apologising in case she told me off! She didn't, she just said, 'I'm sure you'll be fine, dear'. Then at the end of the assembly in which I successfully read my reading, Miss Howard tapped my shoulder and said, 'well done, you had them completely absorbed' - or something like that! I then realised that she maybe wasn't so scary after all!

There were many lovely teachers there that I remember with fondness - Mrs Bosman - maths, and my form teacher in the 1st, 4th and 5th years, Miss Buckley - English, Mrs Yardley - English, Miss Wickens - PE, Miss Baker - history, but the teacher I have the most to thank is Mr Smith - maths. I was not very quick on the uptake mathematically and Mr Smith was so patient - and would repeat things over and over until both he and I were sure that I understood! It is entirely thanks to him that I achieved my C grade in GCSE maths! I did not go to university after my A-Levels because I had already been interviewed and subsequently offered a place at nursing school in Ipswich at the end of my lower 6th year - the course started in October 1992 when all my school year would be starting university - so the timing was perfect to complete my A-levels. Back then you only needed 5 GCSE passes to do your Nursing Diploma so I was kind of over qualified but it made the theory side of the course much easier - although the practical side was very hard for a naive 18 year old! I definitely grew up during my three years of training!

Apart from a year's break in 2006, I have been a Registered Nurse ever since - working in many clinical areas including orthopaedics, cardiac ICU, surgery, nursing homes and finally finding a clinical area that I liked enough to stay in since 2003(!) - the speciality of Endoscopy, which is a nice area to be in. I have still not gained my nursing degree though - although there are plenty of opportunities to do so on a part time basis - but I have 'never found the time'! One day perhaps. I now live in Leeds which is where all my family are from. We moved down to Leigh-

on-Sea when I was 7 and when my Dad's job was transferred from the Leeds office to the London office. The family was considering moving back to Leeds in 1985/6 time, but by then of course, I had passed my 11+ and my Mum (and me) didn't want me have to start again at a new school back in Leeds - where they had abolished the 11+ system years before. So we stayed and then one by one as my brother and I left school and left home, we all ended up back in Leeds by 2003! I am happily married to my second husband, Lee, who is a Psychotherapist, and we are hoping to start a family with the help of IVF over the next few weeks, and if unsuccessful, apply to adopt.

I have fond memories of my time at Westcliff and having moved away from the area in 1992 and never having come back except for overnight visits, joining WHOGA is a lovely link to a very important part of my past. I have enjoyed looking at the changes to the school on the website and wish it another successful academic year in September!

**Angela Daymond (White) 1955-1960:**

Thank you for all your efforts putting this (Newsletter) together – what a marathon! If there is a response to my first mention in a newsletter, I am quite happy for you to give out my email address. [angela\\_daymond@talktalk.net](mailto:angela_daymond@talktalk.net). I have always wanted to trace **Eluned (Lyn) Williams** who was a good friend at primary school and WHSG.

---

**Obituaries**

**Baroness Platt of Writtle, CBE (Beryl Myatt):**

Beryl passed away on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015.



Beryl in 2010



Beryl with her brother  
In about 1938



Beryl, on her introduction to  
the House of Lords in 1981

Extracts from her Obituary in 'The Times':

"Baroness Platt of Writtle was a wartime aeronautical engineer and peer who did much for the cause of women in science and engineering. Beryl Platt spent the Second World War helping to develop fighter planes but, while toiling for 60 hours a week in a factory as an aeronautical engineer, suffered the regular indignity of being taken for a secretary when she answered the phone. She used the second part of her career - as a Conservative peer and chairwoman of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) - to promote women in science and engineering. In her handbag she carried a copy of the Sex Discrimination Act - and a screwdriver. "It's the symbol of my trade," she said of the tool. "It is also jolly useful when the lights fail." Once, when touring a school, she paused to tighten a loose window.

Platt believed fervently in equality in education and at work. She was determined to stop girls from being discouraged from choosing subjects such as engineering and spearheaded the initiative Women into Science and Engineering (Wise). Launched in 1984, it toured schools in buses equipped with technology workstations. She had enormous energy and an immense sense of duty. Her achievements, she said, were based on "saying yes to the jobs which I have been asked to do". On one occasion the head boy from a Manchester grammar school was despatched to shadow her for a week. At the end he retired to bed with exhaustion while Platt settled down to the next speech for the next event. As well as education, she advocated more job-sharing and part-time work at higher levels of business and worried about helping married women returning to work - something she herself had done. "They feel so inadequate," she said. Even in the week before her death she was delighted to see the news of the installation of the first woman bishop by the Church of England.

Platt was the first from her own family to go to university. She was born Beryl Catherine Myatt in 1923 in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. A shy child, she was described by her father - a bank clerk who had been a prisoner of war in the First World War - as a bookworm, "bloody pig-headed" and cack-handed, for she was tall and not always in full control of her limbs. She was a pupil at Westcliff High School in Essex, and when she was later evacuated to a high school in Slough she arrived with references, which caused the headmistress to wonder whether she had come to teach them or to be taught by them. It was a teacher who told her mother that she must go to Cambridge - "I always remember she used the words, 'she will suck all the juice from the orange'," Platt said. She intended to study maths at Girton but was diverted into aeronautic engineering (engineering was then called mechanical sciences) by a government scheme that offered bursaries to students who studied subjects needed for the war effort. One of the five women engineering students in her year, she discovered that only nine women had gone before them. Cambridge did not give degrees to female students but she was admitted to the "title of degree" in 1943.

Her first job was with the experimental division of Hawker Aircraft, the builder of the Hurricane - of which she became a lifelong admirer. She recalled the looks of male workers when she first arrived at the factory or was rattling off the results of a trial: "My god there's a war on and we've got a woman engineer too! So I couldn't ever let anyone down." However, she enjoyed every minute: "I wore overalls and got fairly filthy and the noise was terrible." She refused to learn to type so as to avoid any risk of secretarial work. And despite enjoying the company of the hard-living Hawker's test pilots, she was never tempted by the racier side of wartime life. When she married in 1949 she left her engineering job - which by then was with British European Airways. She had known her husband, Stewart Platt, since childhood; they used to take ballroom dance classes together. She was held up by his parents as a model pupil, but he preferred messing about in boats and thought Beryl to be a "bloody little swot". They met again in 1948, by which time Stewart had joined the Navy under age and commanded a tank landing craft on D-Day. Mutual sympathy on the early death of their fathers to lung cancer brought them together. They moved to Writtle in Essex - where she was to remain for the next six decades - but village life could not contain her energies. She was nicknamed by her two children "the battleship of the republic" and, later, after her peerage, "the dragoness" by her husband.

It was something of a relief to those around her when an outlet for her energies was found in the rural district council and thereafter in the county council. As chairwoman of the education committee she presided over an explosion in the school-building programme. She received a life peerage in 1981 and was soon on numerous committees fostering careers for women in the sciences - including the Engineering Council. However, she said the offer in 1983 to become the second chairwoman of the Equal Opportunities Commission (set up in 1975 under the Sex Discrimination Act with powers to enforce it) had come out of the blue. She was 60: "I am embarking on my first paid job for 30 years just when most people are thinking about retirement." Although she had established an admirable reputation as a speaker in the Lords,

the reaction among some peers was "Baroness Who?" There were some doubters too. "Sexual harassment was something she thought only happened to women of disrepute," one former colleague said. Her new role meant commuting several days a week to the EOC's offices in Manchester but she said she was good at working on trains and eating sandwiches. Her husband, a textile manufacturer, was happy to cook but she enjoyed doing "housewifely things" as well as taking a carburettor to pieces. Holidays were spent sailing on her husband's boat, though she suffered sea sickness and often flew out to meet him. She taught both her son and daughter how to make pastry as children. "And because I would always get out a screwdriver when necessary my daughter automatically does the same thing."

Her son Roland took over the family textile business after her husband died in 2003. Roland died of pancreatic cancer last December. Her daughter Vicky followed her mother in reading sciences at Cambridge and now has her own practice as a chartered accountant. Platt was pleased when one of her six grandchildren pursued a science subject and was particularly delighted when one of her granddaughters read engineering at Cambridge. "

*As her education at Westcliff had so many fond memories for her and equipped her so well for adult life, Beryl's wish was that the school song was included at both her funeral and memorial service. Dr Hayman attended the memorial service.*

**Kathleen (Kate) Mary Sampson (nee Pickering)** (attended WHSG late 1930s):

My grandma Kate was a truly remarkable woman. Career-wise I am proud to say that she was the first female headmistress of the Garrison school at Shoebury. At her interview she knew all of the officers' ranks (and family background) and her professionalism won the day for her. She ran Hinguar School very successfully for 20 years. Family-wise, Kate shaped our lives in her image. My mother maintains that her career would never have taken off the way it did, had she not had Kate as a role model. In her words "here was a woman who could do everything (and she did) in a time when women were not expected or allowed to". Kate had a never-ending capacity for loving her family, friends, and school children, and listening to them when she talked with them. Kate was loved and respected by all of us. We knew if Kate said she would do something she would do it! If there was a problem in her life Kate would solve it in true "Kate style". She would not take the easiest solution but would pick the solution that was guided by her principles and her religious beliefs. In her latter years Kate was physically handicapped and housebound, but she refused to leave the bungalow where she had nursed her husband, my grandad Eric, through his last days. Kate never let her living situation destroy her principles and beliefs. She never complained, and made the most of the quality of the life she had with stoicism and courage.

Although her family ended up scattering far across the globe, Kate continued to hold a special place in our hearts. My sister and I travelled to Southend, from the US and Netherlands respectively, in the summer of 2015 to celebrate Kate's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with her. I have lived in the US for over 20 years now and, due to our shared history of attending WHSG, Kate would carefully send me a copy of the Old Girls newsletter she received every year. Kate won't be sending me the newsletter this year; instead I have submitted this obituary in her honour. I will finish where I started; my grandma Kate was a truly remarkable woman. We will all miss her tremendously.

*Submitted to the Newsletter by **Andrea DeBarber (nee Sampson)**, Kate's granddaughter, who attended WHSG early 1980s. Andrea DeBarber, PhD, is currently a Research Assistant Professor in the School of Medicine at Oregon Health & Science University, Portland OR.*

**Muriel Clough**

Passed away in 2014.

Notified by her daughter, **Rosemary Martin (Clough)**

**Patricia Bryant (Page) 12/11/47 – 10/4/15:-**

Pat joined WHSG in September 1959, from Prince Avenue Junior School. I joined from North Street; we were put in the same form, the infamous 1H, with Miss Howard as our form teacher. We were friends for over 55 years, until her sudden death last year. Whilst she stayed on to take her 'A' levels in 1966, I left school from the Lower VI Secretarial in 1965 and became a shorthand-typist which was very fashionable in those days. Pat went to work in Insurance. We both got married and had our families, seeing each other when we could. She had a wonderful flair for cooking (unlike myself) and she could produce a different dish for every day of the year. My children particularly liked her pumpkin pie, which she used to bring over, when in season.

My special friend Pat was a lovely lady with a fantastic sense of humour, was kind and extremely wise. Many will remember her as a quiet pupil but she loved to jive to Elvis! Her father paid someone, poor soul, to queue up to buy tickets for us to see The Beatles at the Odeon, Southend, all those years ago. I cherish our friendship and feel blessed that I gained a place at WHSG and met Pat, as normally our paths would never have crossed. I'm sure there are plenty of other Old Girls who have made life-long friend, like Pat and myself.

**A personal tribute from Hazel Harman (Giles)**

**Pam Thomas (Wright) (1958-63):**

Pam passed away in March 2015. She was living in Spain where she had been since she retired. She always tried to arrange her visits to England to coincide with the annual reunion whenever she could.

**Judy Spiceley (Parrinder) 1958-63**

---

**New Design & Technology Block**

Westcliff High School for Girls has been awarded a significant sum of money towards the cost of our new Craft, Design & Technology (CDT) block which will be based to the east of the main building.



## View of the entrance to the new CDT facility

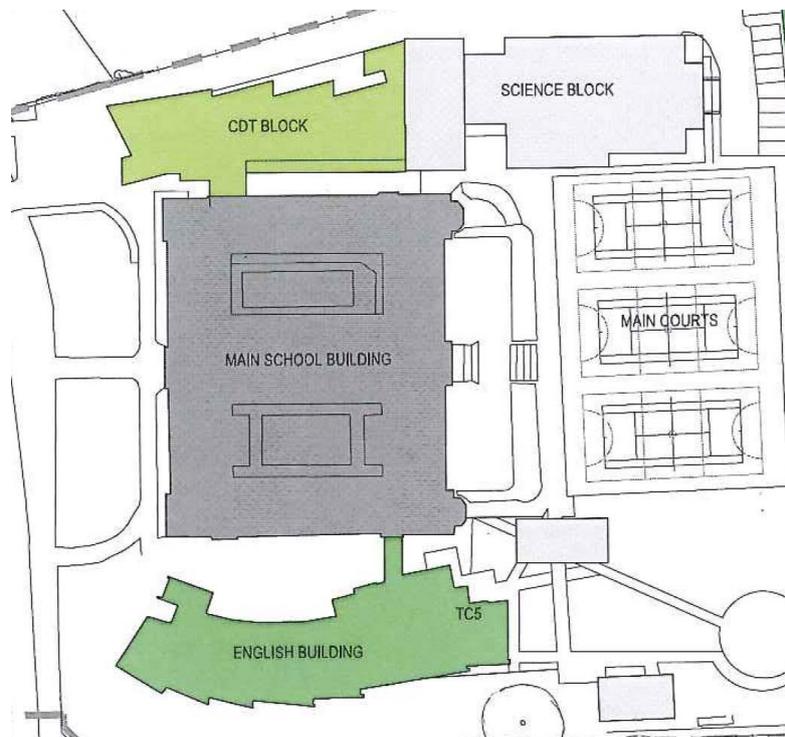
The new building is expected to cost just under £4 million, and the grant from the Education Funding Agency through the Condition Improvement Fund is for £3.6 million.

WHSG already has building permission in place for this new project and we hope that work can begin on it in October this year. We expect it to take about 14 months to build after which we will begin the process of fitting it out with the specialist equipment needed to teach these subjects, aiming to have it fully in use for September 2018.

This new building will replace the tatty demountables currently used by CDT plus a number of sheds and other temporary stores. It also means we can bring together CDT into one combined area, instead of having Graphics/Engineering rooms, Food Rooms and Textiles Rooms in different parts of the school.

Our original plans include the idea of linking this new building to our main school building through walkways and a walk through into the Science Block. We hope to retain these aspects of the build, but some aspects of it may be subject to change as we identify how much we can achieve with the money we have been awarded.

During the building work we expect to house CDT in some temporary accommodation. This new build will also mean we have to move the bicycle sheds and the bin store to new locations. We also hope to build some additional car parking spaces as part of the work.



Site plan showing the location of the building

This project will also allow our school to permanently change our Admissions Number for Year 7 pupils to 184 as we will now have the space to accommodate this extra form group.

By relocating the Food Rooms to the new building we will also have the opportunity to extend the Library so it is big enough to meet the needs of our pupils and free up some rooms for general teaching which are needed as the school roll grows.



**East elevation of the proposed new building**

### **WHSG HAS TO RAISE £300,000**

The total value of the capital bids which the school is due to receive is just under £4million. The government capital funding projects for schools are massively oversubscribed and only a small percentage are granted. In order to secure this funding from the government, the school had to pledge to raise £300,000 from its own resources so as to demonstrate our commitment to the project. **This equates to £261 per pupil at the school.**

All the students at school are currently benefitting from the excellent new facilities developed over the last twelve years in terms of the West Wing, the new Sixth Form block and the Dance Studio and Fitness Suite amongst others. These improvements were only possible thanks to the support of parents and pupils at the time. As you will see from the images of the proposed new block, it will provide a superb environment both for the schooling of your children, as well as those to come.

Over the period to September 2018 there will be a number of ongoing strands towards raising the funds required. We will be appointing an events co-ordinator for this project but in the meantime please contact our Finance and Operations Director, Mr Nigel Brunning, if you have any questions or ideas, want to help or would like more information.

Thank you very much for your continued support. We are looking forward to getting the whole school working together to achieve something fantastic.

**Dr Paul Hayman**

Congratulations to Helen Boyd on being elected to Southend Council on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Helen is representing Blenheim Park.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
--------------------

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

---

**Note to all Committee Members:**

The next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016 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.**

---

If you do not have the use of a printer to print the Lunch order form, please contact Sue McCamley at the School or email her at: [pastpupils@whsg.info](mailto:pastpupils@whsg.info).

## 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](http://www.whsg.info) → Extracurricular → Past Pupils

---

### WHOGA Luncheon 2015

#### List of attendees – Current names first

Peggy Adams (Renwick)	Tina Gowers (Webb)	Anne Rickard (Turner)
Joan Aldridge (Barrell)	Anne Hague (Whatley)	Dorothy Rickard
Carol Attersley (Cottridge)	Dr Paul Hayman	Nicola Santamaria (Pope)
Shirley Baker (Philpott)	Nancy Howard, OBE	Joy Sawkins (Hartley)
Ann Boulter	Sarah Hunt (Saint)	Dot Simmonds (Stevens)
Anne Box	Annette Jordan (Rayner)	Gaye Smart (Gillmore)
Helen Boyd (Skinner)	Pat Kenny (Tomkins)	Eileen Symington (Macklin)
Shirley Bradley (Prentice)	Jennifer Lawler (Philpotts)	Pauline Taylor (Barker)
Jo Brockis	Susan Layzell (Gallacher)	Jennifer Thorogood (Clarke)
Keely Buckle (Brown)	Hilary Le Marie (Gothard)	Carol Tissington (Wilson)
Jacque Carter (Storey)	Josephine Lennox (Hall)	Doris Underwood (Mathers)
Norma Chandler (Evans)	Sheila Leys (Clarke)	Fiona Walton (Cummins)
Christine Dean (Moses)	Margaret Lockhart	Carol Webb (Carlile)
Lisa Clarke (Dixon)	Helen Morgan (Catton)	Sheila Webb (Milbourne)
Anne Cornell (Martin)	Rosi Morgan-Barry (Sage)	Liz Wheatley (Sharp)
Hilary Cox (James)	Alison Morrison (Clarke)	Jane Whittington (Jarrett)
Liz Day (Lucas)	Ann Mott	Lesley Wilkins (Wood)
Pauline Devereux (Bates)	Jane Murphy (Donnithorne)	Martin Wilkins
Katie Dyos-Smith (Dyos)	Isobel Musson (Wright)	Linda Wines (Morris)
Janice Faint (Williams)	Dawn Pyne (Tyler)	Lesley Woodward (Ogden)
Rosemary Faunch	Debbie Pyne (Skeels)	Helen Woollin (Glazer)
Nareen Foley (Crumpler)	Karen Ratchford (Hughes)	
Tessa Fox	Carol Reeve	
Kay Gibb (Seabrook)	Pamela Regan (Summers)	
Marilyn Goodman		

**SATURDAY 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

12.00pm – 5.00pm

**MENU**

**Seasonal Vegetable Soup**

OR

**Yorkshire Pudding filled with Creamy Mash and Pork Sausages**

topped with an Onion Gravy

OR

**King Prawn Salad – Juicy King Prawns served in a tomato Mayonnaise**

on a bed of salad leaves

\*\*\*\*\*

**Roast Sirloin of Beef Chasseur – Slices of English Beef served with a Chasseur Sauce – Mushrooms, Tomatoes, White Wine and Tarragon**

OR

**Chargrilled Chicken Breast topped with home cooked Honey Glazed Gammon and hunters sauce and Melted Mozzarella Cheese**

OR

**Smoked Haddock, Spinach and King Prawn Pie** topped with

an Olive Oil drizzle and Balsamic Reduction dressing

OR

**Vegetarian alternative:**

**Vegetable Lasagne**

\*\*\*\*\*

Potatoes and Seasonal Vegetables, Roll & Butter

\*\*\*\*\*

**Affinity's Own Crispy Crème Brûlée** served with Hedgerow Fruits and Vanilla Ice Cream

OR

**Whipped Cream Filled Profiteroles topped with a warm Chocolate Sauce**

and served with Clotted Cream

OR

**Apple and Sultana Slice – Traditional poached Apple, Sultanas and Mixed Spice wrapped in puff pastry** served with a Jug of Warm Custard Sauce

\*\*\*\*\*

Coffee or Tea

\*\*\*\*\*

Cost **£19.00**

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 is 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 2016 – ANNUAL LUNCHEON – Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

12 for 12.30 pm

**PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY**

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 £19 per head):

***Please tick the relevant box***

<u>Starters</u>	<b>Seasonal Vegetable Soup (vegetarian)</b>	
	<b>Yorkshire Pudding filled with Creamy Mash and Pork Sausages</b>	
	<b>King Prawn Salad</b>	
<u>Main Courses:</u>	<b>Roast Beef Chasseur</b>	
	<b>Chargrilled Chicken</b>	
	<b>Smoked Haddock, Spinach &amp; King Prawn Pie</b>	
	<b>Vegetable Lasagne (vegetarian)</b>	
<u>Desserts:</u>	<b>Crème Brûlée</b>	
	<b>Profiteroles</b>	
	<b>Apple &amp; Sultana Slice</b>	

Checklist:-

I enclose a cheque for £..... (made payable to W.H.O.G.A.)	
<b><u>I enclose a self-addressed and stamped envelope</u></b> (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 <b>order</b> a 'House Badge' for ..... (name of 'House') costing £2 (payable at the lunch)	
--	--

**Please apply by 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016**