

DURHAM HIGH SCHOOL OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

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Dear Member,

Here we are again – already well into the term, with the summer holidays just a distant memory. I hope most of you managed to enjoy some sunshine this year and that you have been able to enjoy the mini heat wave at the end of September and beginning of October. You will all have had an opportunity to read about Mrs Templeman's retirement in the summer newsletter from school and will be interested to know that the Governors will be interviewing candidates for the headship this month. The OGA bade Mrs Templeman farewell at the Summer Lunch and on behalf of the Association our President, Eileen Perkins, presented her with an ecclesiastical stole.



Mrs Templeman has sent this message to the OGA:

"I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my warmest thanks for the gift of the beautiful white stole I was presented with at the OGA lunch in July. It was the perfect farewell present as it summarises what has been central for the wonderful 13 years I have had at the High School – the coming together of my passion for the education of girls together with my faith. The fact that the stole is embroidered with a St Cuthbert's Cross in the school colours means that whenever I am presiding at the great joyous Christian festivals of Easter, Christmas, etc as well as weddings and baptisms I shall wear the DHS stole and think of you all.

I hope very much to be able to keep in touch with many of you through the OGA and may I issue an open invitation to all members of the Association to drop in at the Rectory in Theale if ever you are in the area – we are just off junction 12 on the M4. For those who would like to worship with us, our Sunday service is at 10am.

Speech Day

Mr Andrew Dilnot, CBE, an economist, who is currently the Principal of St Hugh's College, Oxford was the guest speaker this year. His speech was enjoyed by the entire audience, who appreciated his humour and also his very sound advice to those about to embark on university life. Mrs Templeman returned to give the report on the past school year, which once again had been a very successful one academically. At GCSE almost 61% of entries achieved A* or A and well over a third of the group achieved 9 or more A* and A grades. At AS level 72.99% of entries achieved A to B and at A2 (better known as A level) almost half of the entries achieved A* or A. 88.03% of the entries achieved A* to C.

Once again girls also joined in the report and told of new ventures: an exchange with a group of girls from a school in Providence, Rhode Island, USA and a sports' tour to Barbados, which also involved raising money for the Thelma Vaughan Home run by Dr. Barnardo's in Barbados. We were entertained by an extract from *Grease*, a cartwheeling pupil and on a more serious note the evening was brought to a close by the singing of The Blessing by the Senior Choir.

Looking to the Future

Mr Alan Whelpdale, whom the Governors have appointed Acting Head for this year, gave an outline of some of the events and projects in store for the future. Special mention was given (with a wry smile) to the Middle School drama production of *The Demon Headmaster* which will be performed in the school studio on 22nd and 23rd November, Various examples of Outreach Projects were given. The Music Department would be working not only with our own Y5 pupils but also with those in that year from local schools. The project would culminate in a performance at the Gala Theatre on 23rd January. Outreach for Ys8&9 would take the form of Greek Masterclasses. Two 6th formers would visit Auschwitz, sponsored by the Holocaust Education Trust and later share the experience both in and outside school.

Staff Changes

Mrs Bruce, from the Modern Languages Department, who had also been Head of Y8 (L4) had left in July to become Head of Modern Languages at St Robert's in Washington. Newcomers are Dr Adrian Frank, who will be Head of Sixth Form and the Rev'd Brett Vallis, who is to be the new Chaplain.

London Event

Unfortunately we have had to cancel the London Dinner which was to have taken place in 2012. Too few members were able to attend to make it financially viable. It is hoped that another attempt can be made to organise an event in the academic year 2012-13. You will be kept fully informed of all plans.

AGM and Summer Lunch

At the AGM in July, committee members Susan Hopps and Katherine Anderson were re-elected and Caroline Hellens joined the committee as a representative of the 2011 leavers. Caroline is studying English at York University and was able to attend her first committee meeting on 3rd October, as term had not yet started. We were delighted to welcome a new face to the meeting. One of the matters discussed at the meeting was the need to have the email addresses of younger members, who may change their address when they go to university. **If you have received this newsletter by post, but would be happy to have it sent electronically, please get in touch. My email address is included in the heading of this letter.**

The meeting was followed by the summer lunch which was held in Junior House Hall – the perfect venue for such an event. We all enjoyed a delicious meal, before some of us had to dash off to Fun Day duties. Those who were free to choose, lingered on, chatting, or wandered round the school to see how things had changed since they were pupils. In 2012 the AGM will probably take place in the summer term, but will not be linked to the OGA Lunch, which will be held in the autumn term, so that you will be able to meet the new Head on this occasion. All details and the application form for tickets will be in the March newsletter.

DHS DVD

A DVD capturing all aspects of school life can be viewed at www.dhsfg.org.uk. Wendy Craig reads the commentary and background music is supplied by the girls themselves.

If you have any news which you would like to share with other Old Girls – graduation, new job, engagement, marriage, new home, retirement – please let me know by the end of November. A *News of Old Girls* supplement will be enclosed with the school newsletter in December.

One of my aims in this newsletter has been to give you information about events where you, as Old Girls, can support the school and also feel part of it, however long ago you may have left. I have memories of trudging in the snow from Leazes House to St Margaret's Church, in order to go to the Carol Service and remember how proud I was, when in Upper Third (Y7) I was chosen to read one of the lessons. I also remember taking part in school productions in the school hall under the direction of Mrs Marshall. Nowadays we do things on a grander scale at DHS – the school is bigger, times have changed – and Durham actually has a proper theatre. Nevertheless, I'm sure the girls experience the same pride, anticipation, excitement and nervousness that we did. I hope to see you at some of these events.

Best wishes

Jenifer

Oliver

The next school production will be the musical *Oliver*. This has proved such a popular choice that even members of staff are asking if they may audition. I believe every girl is hoping she lands the role of Nancy.

As usual the musical will be performed at the Gala Theatre and tickets can be obtained from the theatre. You can book online at www.galadurham.co.uk or by phone on 0191 3324041. If you want to book in person, the box office is open Monday – Saturday from 10.00am - 8.30pm. Tickets always go quickly for these performances, so early booking is advisable.

Dates at a Glance.

19th November: Open Day from 10.00am-12.30pm

22nd & 23rd November: Middle School Production of *The Demon Headmaster* at 7pm in the Studio at DHS.

2nd December: Christmas Fayre from 2.00pm-4.30pm. The OGA will be raffling a hamper of Christmas goodies so do come along and support us. The last hamper raffle was won by OG Margaret Alderson (née Potts).

15th December: Carol Service at 2.15pm in Durham Cathedral. This service is always very well attended, so try to come early to get a good seat.

23rd January: Y5 Musical *The Olympics* at 7pm in the Gala Theatre. This is the premiere of the revised version of the musical.

15th-17th March: School production of *Oliver*. Times to be confirmed. Tickets are not yet on sale, but will be, before my next newsletter.

Dates for AGM and OGA Lunch will be in the next newsletter.