

The **OAK**

Winter Edition 2023

Keeping our alumni informed, around the world.





AKS Lytham

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Welcome from the Headmaster

'As you said you had never heard of Salisbury Cathedral', the sender wrote, 'I thought it was about time you had'.



We had found ourselves rummaging through old postcards in a huge warehouse of vintage items. There is something deeply compelling in reading these messages penned long ago: some bland, some cryptic, many borderline illegible. They refer to people, places and events long forgotten, saying nothing or hinting everything.

The postcard of Salisbury Cathedral featured no name or address, just that short, amusingly passive-aggressive note. Sellotape marks on the back showed it had been kept and displayed

and treasured. For 25p, we saved that postcard from oblivion in a dusty cardboard box, and it is valued once again. We cannot tell who wrote the card or where it came from, but that memory and moment shines through.

The stories that are forgotten far outnumber those that are remembered – there were hundreds of postcards in that box, and countless boxes- and we would do well to keep them alive. Given the history of the heritage schools we perhaps have more stories and memories than many. That the school is bustling around me on this crisp February morning, with frequent visitors from generations past, present and future, is testament to the individuals that have contributed to its story over a cumulative three centuries of history. Just a fraction of those memories and stories are captured in this edition of the OAK magazine, but there are so many more out there.

With the launch of the AKS Lytham Foundation and the OAKS Connect website, we hope to bring our community together to advance these stories for future generations, whether that is through career mentoring and advice for current students and alumni, supporting bursaries for those in need, or enabling individuals to reconnect, perhaps after many years. Whilst the formal launch of the Foundation will take place on 5th May, the website is up and running, and the online community is growing rapidly. I look forward to seeing you, online and in person, and cannot wait to see what this new chapter in the story of our schools brings.

David Harrow, Headmaster

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OAKS *Introducing our* Director of Development

I am delighted to join the team at AKS Lytham as Director of Development and Alumni Relations. I am looking forward to supporting and creating value for alumni across all of the heritage schools as well as graduates from AKS Lytham and to support engagement and fundraising for the AKS Lytham Foundation.

I have worked in business development roles in the education and charity sector for 17 years, where I have specialised in leading business growth strategies. I am incredibly passionate about making a positive difference to young people's lives and this is something that I hope the AKS Lytham Foundation will achieve.

In my previous roles I have always believed that by working together we can do so much. This ethos is something I am keen to bring to my new role at AKS to support the OAKS alumni. Through working in collaboration with alumni from each of our legacy schools: Arnold, King Edward VII, Queen Mary, KEQMS and graduates from AKS Lytham today, plus past and present teachers, I hope that the Development Office can provide an enriched alumni experience for all, whilst respecting the individuality of each of our heritage schools. The Old Boys' Boxing Day Fixture back in December at Fylde Rugby Club was a privilege to be part of and really encapsulated what is possible when alumni groups come together to experience shared passions and interests.



There is also an opportunity for us all to come together under the OAKS banner to provide fantastic opportunities for young people through AKS so that future generations can also benefit. This might be in the form of enabling bursaries for young people, support with careers education and mentoring for AKS students today or simply welcoming new OAKS alumni as they graduate from AKS.

oaksconnect.com
Join your alumni today!
We currently have 500+ members online.



Right: Our new website, oaksconnect.com is now live!

I am hoping to bring you some exciting developments in 2023 from the new Development Office at AKS.

The first of which has been our new dedicated OAKS alumni website which launched on Boxing Day. Oaksconnect.com has been designed specifically for alumni from our heritage schools as well as graduates from AKS today. The aim of the platform is to enable you to connect with old friends and colleagues, attend events and reunions, keep up to date with news whilst also being able to support AKS students and graduates. You can create a profile and register in 3 easy steps and join our growing online network!

In January, we also welcomed Mike Rhodes, our new Development and Alumni Engagement Officer, who is now working with me in the Development Office. Mike is a sales and marketing professional who has worked alongside me in the charity sector in our previous roles. Mike will be focusing on keeping the new alumni website and platform up to date, building the brand of the new AKS Lytham Foundation Charity and supporting the organisation of alumni events and reunions.



As well as focusing on supporting our mighty OAKS alumni, there is also a lot of work going on behind the scenes in readiness for the launch of the AKS Lytham Foundation which will be held on Friday 5th May at AKS. Please do read on for more information about the Foundation and how you can get involved.

Looking ahead to later in the year, we are also working with alumni groups to support with organising various class and year group reunions in 2023. Additionally, we are working with the Old Arnoldians where we are supporting them with organising the 125th Old Arnoldians' Anniversary Dinner that will be held at AKS on Saturday 30th September 2023 (more information and tickets will go on our website in April).

It certainly feels like 2023 is going to be a year of new connections and opportunities for our mighty OAKS alumni and if you have any suggestions or ideas for your alumni, then please do get in touch with us.

Sarah Walton

Director of Development

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Old Lidunians defend their crown for the 3rd year

The pressure was on for the KES old boys as they took to a pitch filled with the raucous sound of the “Peaky Blinder” from Arnold fans at the Old Boys’ Boxing Day Rugby Fixture, 2022.

We caught up with the Touch Judge for the match, Mr Rudd, and ex KES and AKS teacher and passionate supporter of the boys in blue.

On a cold winter afternoon, with the flood lights on, the boys in blue took to a pitch filled with the raucous sound of the “Peaky Blinder” from Arnold fans. After two consecutive victories the pressure was on for the KES old boys to make their hat-trick of wins and the Old Arnoldians showed up in full to take back their crown.

The Old Arnoldians started as the stronger side with some excellent play and a constant bombardment of the Old Lid’s line. It was during one of these early phases that KES lost their inspirational captain to concussion after a massive try-saving tackle.

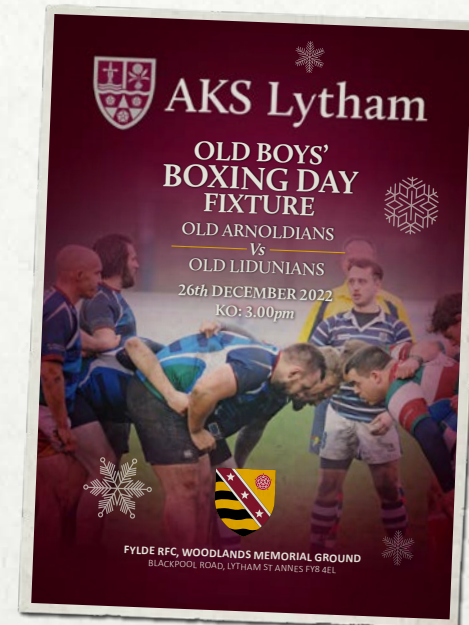
After conceding a 3-point penalty success, the KES side opened the Lid’s account with a fine individual try from scrum-half Adam Lannigan, which saw a lightning turn of pace over 50m taking him clear of the Arnold defenders and scoring. Capitalising on their momentum the boys in blue powered over for a fine team try and pounced on an Arnold error to fly hack the ball up the pitch, allowing for the 3rd try from the KES side.

Unfortunately, due to some poor discipline from the Old Lid’s pack, we saw a sin binning and several penalties being conceded. The Old Arnoldians were able to take advantage of this and score 2 tries, drawing the match to a first half finish of 19 – 17, to the Old Lidunians.

The second half was a scrappier affair with the conditions starting to worsen.

The final score of the game was from a steal at the lineout where Alex Stanier gathered a bouncing ball and, to the delight of every true blue in the ground, out-paced the defence to seal the victory in the right-hand corner.

The final score 24 – 17.



A wonderful afternoon at a packed Woodlands was finished off with a fine “Boat Race”, Team Player of the Day award (Old Lids Adam Lannigan) and a lot of catching up with the old boys and girls from both schools. It was lovely to see the clubhouse buzzing with chatter about memories of times at Queen Mary, Arnold and King Edwards. It was mentioned that very few if any schools in the country could host such an event. With the Old Lidunians winning for a third consecutive year, the Arnold clifential already had their books out signing on this year’s Year 13 players.

On a personal note, it was great to catch up with not only a lot of my ex 1st and 2nd teamers but also my old year 8 maths sets in particular.

Phill Rudd



Arnold School Memories



Top: Sam Wood (far right). Photo courtesy of Arnold School, Holdgate, 2009.
Middle: Sam in his Jaguar XK120 RAC Rally Car (during the 1950s and 1960s).
Bottom: Sam flying over the coastline of Lytham in his de Havilland DH.60 Moth aircraft.

Meeting Old Arnoldian, Sam Wood, aged 99

It was my pleasure to meet Sam Wood at his son David’s home in Lytham in January. Sam attended Arnold School during the 1930s.



It was a morning of memories as I shared with Sam the Arnold whole school photographs from 1935 and 1940 which have been preserved in the AKS archives. On these photographs, Sam recognised many former classmates such as brothers Dennis and Alan Grime, Biggie Brierley and Norman Quick. He also recognised many teachers, most notably Frank Truswell Pennington who founded Arnold House School in the late 1800s. Mr Pennington features on the photographs as Headmaster, a role which he had undertaken since the school had originally been registered as Arnold House School Limited in 1913. Sam remembers Mr Pennington as a firm but fair headmaster and this is very much in keeping with the description of him in Sir Martin Holdgate’s 2009 book about Arnold School.

There were 4 Houses during Sam’s time at Arnold (the Normans, the Danes, the Celts and the Saxons) and Sam was in Saxon House. He also played rugby and enjoyed other sports at the school such as shooting.

Sam also features in the Arnold School Book written by Sir Martin Holdgate. Here is Sam during a Cadet Corps Inspection as Captain George Holt escorts the Inspecting Officer, with Lt Norman Lees and Sgt Major George Neal behind him.

Arnold School was founded on the values of commitment, service and loyalty. During Sam’s time at Arnold, these values were certainly forefront when Sam, alongside many other pupils at that time, joined the army to serve his country during World War II. Sam left Arnold when he was 17 years old in 1940 to serve with HM Forces in the 5th Manchester Regiment as an Army Tank Operator. During his service with the 5th Manchester Regiment, Sam also taught many fellow soldiers to drive which was a skill very few young men had learnt before they joined the army. Sam’s duty is a reminder of the courageous service many former pupils of our heritage schools gave for their country during World War II.

When Sam returned from the War, he settled back in the Fylde area and later in life his hobbies included rally driving and flying.

It was wonderful to spend time sharing memories with Sam, our oldest Old Arnoldian, and I am very grateful to Sam and his family for the opportunity.

Sarah Walton,
Director of Development



King Edward VII School Memories

Iain Hutton's mother, Phyllis Hutton, was one of the first Lady Chairpersons for the Parents' Committee at King Edward School in the 1970s.

She recognised the importance of fundraising for the school and led one of the first dinner dances in the Big Hall. Phyllis is now 97 years old and taking life a little easier. She has a love for music and up to only a few years ago she was a regular at Lowther Pavilion. Phyllis also went to the Edinburgh Festival to not only see, but to meet the Bay City Rollers and she remains their oldest fan in the world and is affectionately known as Gràn a Lang (after one of their songs) by fans all over the world.



Iain Hutton former pupil of King Edward, School Reunion 2022

We caught up with Old Lidunian, Iain Hutton, who graduated from King Edward School in 1979 as he shared his recent 2022 reunion experience.

Another great success.

The 2022 Reunion was a follow up to the 1999 (20-year reunion) King Edward boys only and the joint one with our QMS friends in 2009 (both at the Clifton Arms Hotel in St Annes).

The 2022 reunion came to fruition when Ian King and Clive Marquis-Carr were travelling on a bus in Edinburgh, whilst on holiday with their wives – what began as an idea led to a Facebook page being hastily set up and plans were made for the event.

Gone was the long hair, platform shoes and flared trousers – sensibility had taken its place, but when the group met for the tour of the school in the morning the years simply melted away – “it was as if we had been returning to school after a summer break, not 13 years since the last one, and certainly not 43 years since we left” commented the group.

The whole event was a great success – the tour was inspirational, led by Sarah Shepherd at AKS, who took time to take us to every corner of the old school, including some that were still ‘out of bounds’ even in the 1970s. Sarah listened intently to many anecdotes of our



bygone era. Memories flooded back of the teachers, some with particular ‘unique’ teaching styles! when certain classrooms were re-entered for the first time in 43 years.

The Pavilion café was an excellent end to a wonderful morning of memories and re kindling ‘old friendships’, some that had endured since local junior schools.

A night out in Lytham was an opportunity to reminisce even further, possibly helped along by the odd drink or two and we were joined by some others who could not make the daytime tour which only added to the evening.

Plans are already in discussion for a future reunion, maybe in 3 or 5 years’ time – Pete Meredith commented “maybe we could entice some of our international classmates, who were unable to attend this one”. We all agreed, before saying our farewells, that we would do this again.

A Woman in a Man's World

Liz Bickerstaffe shares the story of Queen Mary alumna, Jennifer Coulston-Herrmann, on her inspiring career in the police force.

A former head girl recently returned in September to entertain the QMS Association on her career as ‘A Woman in a Man's World’.

Jennifer Coulston-Herrmann (née Taylor) is now a public speaker and raconteur, following a successful career in the police force. By her own admission she may not always have been the model pupil, but she was lively and dutiful and a popular choice for head girl at QMS from 1987-88.

When she expressed an interest in joining the police, the careers advisor discouraged her by saying that ‘girls from this school don't join the police’. Determined to follow her own path, she studied for a BA (Hons) in Applied Social Science (Criminology and Psychology) at Edge Hill College and joined Lancashire Constabulary in 1991.

Jen worked across Lancashire in a variety of predominantly uniformed policing roles moving very swiftly up the ranks. By the year 2000, Jen was the youngest female Inspector in Lancashire Police. She was a founder member of the Women's Network for Lancashire Police and also became the Deputy Equality Liaison Officer for the Force. In 2001, Jen became a National Hostage Negotiator and undertook her training with the Metropolitan Police. She later became a Kidnap Negotiator and part of the National Cadre, attending serious and protracted incidents throughout England and Wales.

Despite the very serious nature of her work Jen's talk was often hilarious and demonstrated how a sense of humour could be essential in defusing very tense situations. The discipline and resilience she developed at home and at school had stood her in good stead for her career enabling her to progress quickly in a predominantly man's world, whilst managing to juggle being a parent to twins! And the S46 Preston bus journey provided her with the best riot training ever, she joked. “Much better than any training the Home Office offered the Police!”

During her service, Jen completed a Master's degree in Training and Evaluation, achieving an MEd from Hull University in 2004. As a Police Federation representative, she represented staff with grievances or complaints and was frequently invited to speak at events on the national stage.

Following retirement, Jen facilitated training and conference events, along with public and after dinner speaking and speech writing. As well as hosting a Ukrainian family, she has recently passed the selection process to become a magistrate, saying ‘I always like to be kept busy!’

On behalf of the QMS Association, Liz Bickerstaffe thanked AKS for hosting the event in the Sixth Form Centre and the school's catering team for providing a delicious afternoon tea.



Queen Mary School Memories



Above: Jen is pictured with her Long Service and Good Conduct Medal in 2013.

She maintained, “I definitely got in more trouble at QMS than I ever did in my 23 years in the police!”

More information on Jen can be found at www.jen-ch.co.uk/about-jen



AKS The School Today *February Half Term Highlights*



Performing Arts

Congratulations to the creative team, cast and backstage crew of this year's jaw-dropping show at Lowther Pavilion, Chicago which sold out in an unprecedented time

It was also great to see so many students volunteering to take part in this term's Tea Time Concert held in the Recital Room

Sixth Form

Two of our students will be embarking on the next stage of their education at Oxbridge. Mia W has secured a place at the University of Oxford to read Theology and Religion at Oriel College; and Miranda A has received an offer to study Modern and Medieval Languages at Murray Edwards College, Cambridge

Our talented mathematicians from Sixth Form and Year 11 attended the Florence Nightingale Day at Lancaster University as part of their academic enrichment programme

Our Tycoon in Schools teams continued their track record of success on the leader board in this national competition

Thank you to the group of ten Year 12 students who undertook a day of service planting Christmas trees at the beach on their Round Square Service Day

The Medical Society ran a session for Prep School children on basic healthcare



Senior Sport

Congratulations to our sports teams on their recent successes:

U14 netball team gave a great account of themselves in the Lancashire tournament

U14 and U12 girls' hockey teams remain unbeaten this season

U13A girls' hockey team will now represent Lancashire in the next round of the national competition

U16 basketball team became county finalists in the Lancashire Cup final. In the Cup final they lost by 11 points to Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School despite playing brilliantly

U16 rugby team is through to the finals of the Lancashire Cup after beating Standish High in the semi-final.

U15 boys' football team remains unbeaten this season

Lisa P (Year 10), Lola H (Year 9) and Elsie T (Year 7) qualified for the county championships in Cross Country following the Wyre and Fylde competition, hosted at AKS

Nursery & Prep School

We welcomed Pre-School parents to join their children for art and craft sessions to celebrate Chinese New Year

Year 6 parents attended their Showcase Assembly to hear the children talk about their work from across the curriculum

Our U11 Indoor Athletics Team won 1st place at the LSA Sports Hall Athletics competition

This success followed positive performances by our U10 and U11 football and hockey teams

Well done to everyone for taking part in this year's NSPCC Number Day

Many thanks to our PTA for the Nursery and Prep School's fantastic Valentine's Disco

Introducing AKS Lytham FOUNDATION

**Your opportunity
to transform a
young person's life.**

On 5th May 2023, we are delighted to be launching the AKS Lytham Foundation (Charity No 1191646) which is a newly formed and separate charity to the school.

Unlike many schools that benefit from an endowment to start a Foundation, we are building an entirely new fund to achieve our vision which is:

"To create a legacy enabling young people to change their world through AKS Lytham".

All the Trustees are alumni from our heritage schools and the Foundation will have minimal expenses to ensure that all donations made will be used to support its vision.

We are incredibly passionate about the life-changing opportunity that studying at a school like AKS can provide a young person, so it is at this event that we will launch our first ever Bursary Appeal.

AKS Foundation Launch Event

Friday 5th May at 6:30pm at AKS Lytham

At the launch event, we will be recognising the generous financial contribution made by the Old Arnoldians (Arnold School) as well as the support from the Old Lidunians (King Edward VII School) that enabled the refurbishment of the AKS Senior School Hall in 2021.

To help enable future generations who attend AKS Lytham to recognise their OAKS alumni, we will also be unveiling the new name for our Senior School Hall, which will be the OAKS Hall.

The launch event will also be an opportunity to hear from our new Foundation patrons.



Our ambition is to be able to offer fully-funded and inclusive, parental means-tested bursaries so that we can provide financial support to those young people who would benefit the most. This means that an AKS Lytham Foundation Bursary would cover not only tuition but all associated costs such as uniform, curriculum trips and lunches.

If you share our ambition to widen access to the school, please consider making a donation, or contact our Development Office for more information. By giving, you confirm your belief in the work of our school, the dedication of the AKS team and the impact an AKS education will have on a student's future.

*Scan this QR code
to book your place at
this historic event:*



Upcoming School and Community Events

Senior School Open Evening

Wednesday 8th March at 6.00pm at AKS

AKS Cabaret

Thursday 30th March at 7.00pm at AKS

Lytham Club Day

Saturday 24th June in Lytham

AKS PTA Summer Festival

Sunday 2nd July, 1.00pm to 4.00pm at AKS

Staff XI v Headmasters XI Cricket Match

Sunday 2nd July at 1.00pm to 3:30pm at AKS

The Old Arnoldians' 125th Anniversary Dinner

Saturday 30th September at AKS

(tickets will be on sale from

April 2023 on oaksconnect.com)



oaksconnect.com
is now live!

Stay Connected

Facebook: @AKSLythamOAKS

Email: alumni@akslytham.com

If you are a former pupil or teacher from our legacy schools Arnold, King Edward VII, Queen Mary, KEQMS or you are a former pupil, parent or grandparent of AKS then this online network is for you!

Join today to find old friends and colleagues, attend events and reunions whilst also being able to support AKS students and graduates.

Create a profile and register in 3 easy steps and be part of this growing online network:

