

## FRIENDS' SCHOOL OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION



### WINTER NEWSLETTER, MARCH 2026

Dear Old Scholar

I hope everyone had a wonderful winter break, Christmas and beginning to 2026. And that you are still keeping to your various resolutions at the end of February/early March, which might include re-engaging with old school friends or taking trips down memory lane... If so, the winter newsletter is a good place to start. This edition brings news of our 2026 Annual General Meeting, information on how to contact Old Scholars using the website, archive treasures, achievements of Old Scholars past and present, reunion reports, contributions, and also, sadly, obituaries. As always, we wouldn't suggest printing it out because there are still a lot of pages and images. Before the contents, the Annual General Meeting 2026 and OSA Accounts.

#### Annual General Meeting

Old Scholars are warmly invited to the Annual General Meeting of the Old Scholars' Association in 2026. The 2026 AGM is scheduled for 25 April 2026 at 2pm at Friends' Meeting House Saffron Walden and online. The AGM will be a chance to reconnect with Old Scholars and staff, and to reminisce over refreshments. Parts of the school site can be explored by visitors via north, west and south entrances.



*Rolling the cricket square in 1939.*

#### We invite Old Scholars to arrange Year Group reunions for this day!

We hope this could work similarly to how reunions used to work at Friends' and Families' Day. You could, for instance, come to the AGM, stay for tea and biscuits and then head off to the pub for the rest of the afternoon.

#### Old Scholars' Accounts

Old Scholars can find audited accounts up until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 on the Old Scholars website [here](#), but you have to log-in to view these. Thanks to our Treasurer and the Auditors for their work on these. Email me at [fsswosa@gmail.com](mailto:fsswosa@gmail.com) if you don't have your log-in details. The next audited accounts are due in August 2026.

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### Update on The School Site

There are no further updates on the school site since the previous newsletter. The previous update is available [here](#).

### Party to Celebrate the Life of Sarah Ninot (née Wright, YG 1979)

Year Group 1979's Hansi Manning (née Bader), Jo Trevillion (née Cooper) and Carey Dickinson (née Hingston) have organised a party in Swards End Village Hall on 20th June from 5pm onwards to celebrate the life of Sarah Ninot (née Wright, YG 1979), who died last summer from a brain tumour, and to raise funds for Brain Cancer research.

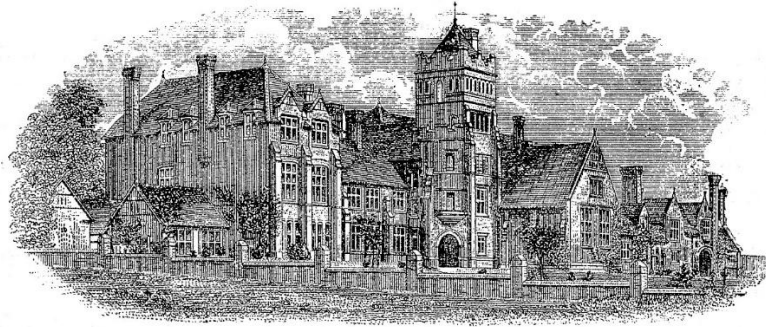
They have written: the cost will be £30 per head to include a hog roast (or vegetarian option) and entertainment. There will be a licensed bar at the venue. Despite the sadness of Sarah's death, we hope that it will be a great excuse for a celebration of friendship and life and hope you can attend.

If you are interested in this get together please DM Carey at [Careydickinson00@gmail.com](mailto:Careydickinson00@gmail.com).

**From The Archives – Martin Hugall**

Martin has picked the following items out from the archives for your enjoyment.

***The first prospectus for the school when it moved to Saffron Walden in 1879***



FRIENDS' SCHOOL, SAFFRON WALDEN,  
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

UNDER THE CARE OF A COMMITTEE OF THE

QUARTERLY MEETING OF LONDON & MIDDLESEX,

AND OF THE ASSOCIATED

QUARTERLY MEETINGS OF BERKS & OXON; ESSEX & SUFFOLK;  
KENT; SUSSEX, SURREY & HANTS.

—◆—  
*For the Children of Members or Attenders of the above Quarterly Meetings.*

*For Children of Friends from other parts of the country, when the School is not full.*

ALSO

*For Children not connected with the Society, who are well recommended, and whose parents are willing that they should be in all respects brought up as the other Children in the School.*

—◆—  
SAFFRON WALDEN is well known as a very healthy place. The air is bracing; the water supply thoroughly good. It may be reached from Liverpool Street and St. Pancras Stations in about two hours.

The School stands upon the chalk, on high ground, about six minutes' walk from the Meeting House and the Railway Station. The Buildings have been constructed and arranged so as to ensure the comfort and convenience of the Scholars. The Rooms are large, airy, and well lighted. A thorough system of warming and ventilation is applied throughout the building.

The Playgrounds are large, and adjoining them is a field used for Cricket and Football.

Every facility for, and encouragement to, out-of-school pursuits is given. A commodious Workshop is provided; and a Carpenter attends for an hour a day to give instruction.

( 2 )

There is a good Museum of Natural Curiosities, and a flourishing Natural History Society of both Boys and Girls.

The leisure-time pursuits of the Girls receive great attention; ample time is given them for recreation. There are two Tennis-courts on their Playground, and active games are encouraged amongst them both in winter and summer.

TEACHING.—The aim of the School is to give a sound and thorough English education, combined with good religious and moral training. Latin and French are taught in the three upper classes. Lessons in Drawing are given by a Master from Cambridge once a week.

The Girls are carefully trained in plain Needlework, and are taught to mend their own clothes.

MUSIC is taught to those Girls whose parents desire it. The charge for this is £4 4s. a year extra.

Care is taken to have a well qualified staff of Teachers. A Master-on-duty has care of the Boys during their play hours, and takes the oversight of their games and other pursuits. The lowest class consists of both Boys and Girls, and is under the care of an experienced Mistress.

EXAMINATION.—The School is annually inspected by a qualified Examiner from Cambridge University, and children are prepared for the Cambridge Local, and College of Preceptors' examinations.

The School hours are from 6.30 to 7.30 and from 9 to 12.30 in the morning, and from 3.30 to 5.30 in the afternoon.

A portion of Scripture is read morning and evening to the children in the presence of the officers of the School and the family generally.

The School is primarily intended for children of Friends belonging to the Quarterly Meetings of London & Middlesex; Sussex, Surrey & Hants; Essex & Suffolk; Berks & Oxon; and Kent,—called the Associated Quarterly Meetings. These will always have a preference. For these children the rates of payment are £16, £20, £26, £32, and £40, according to the circumstances of the parent; and each case of admission at the lower rates is carefully investigated by the Agents of the School and the Committee. Children above the age of fifteen are retained at the three higher rates of payment only. Children of persons not actually in membership, recommended by a Monthly Meeting of the Association, and who are likely to be brought up as Friends, are admitted on the same terms as actual members.

When the School is not full the following classes of children are also admitted:—

1st.—The children of Friends from other parts of the country. These are not admitted at the lowest rates, but at such other higher rates (£20 and upwards) as the Committee may deem suitable to the circumstances of the applicant.

( 3 )

2ndly.—Children not connected with the Society or coming under any of the above conditions, who, after careful enquiry as to their training and character, are deemed suitable by the Committee. Reference to a Friend in the locality where the child resides is desirable in such cases. The rate of admission for such children is £40, reducible at the discretion of the Committee to any sum not less than £32. An additional charge of 30s. a year is made to all children in this class to cover the cost of repairs of clothes and boots.

GENERAL REGULATIONS AS TO ADMISSION.—In all cases application for admission should be made to the Superintendent, who will at once furnish the applicant with the necessary forms applicable to each case. These should be filled up and promptly returned to the Superintendent.

No children are allowed to commence a fresh term after attaining the age of sixteen years.

All payments are to be made half-yearly, and to be in advance. They are to be sent to the Superintendent, or to the Bankers—Gibson, Tuke & Gibson, Saffron Walden.

Four weeks' notice will be given to the parents before the expiration of the term for which payment has been made.

Three months' notice is required of the removal of any child from the School.

No child is to enter or leave on a First-day.

The children are to bring with them not less than the stock of clothing prescribed in the following lists. The articles are to be plain, strong, without ornamental trimmings, and adapted to school wear. Parents may, at their discretion, send a larger stock of clothing than is here prescribed.

FOR BOYS.

2 Cloth caps or hats	1 Overcoat	6 Pairs of socks, run in the heel
3 Jackets	3 Shirts	3 Pairs of boots
3 Waistcoats	6 Shirt collars	1 Pair of leather slippers
3 Pairs of trousers with 2 pairs of loose linings	2 Night shirts	1 Umbrella
	6 Pocket handkerchiefs	

FOR GIRLS.

2 Hats	6 Pairs of stockings, run in the heel	2 Pinafores
1 Winter cloak or jacket	1 Hat and shawl for playground	3 Pairs of boots
2 Summer cloaks or jackets	2 Pairs of stays	1 Pair of leather slippers, or light Oxford shoes
3 Frocks	2 Skirts	3 Nightdresses
2 Black aprons	2 Flannel petticoats	1 Umbrella
6 Pocket handkerchiefs	3 Chemises	
6 Tuckers		

If waterproofs are sent they should be *cloaks*, and not *ulsters*. A small bag to hold linen for the night before leaving school and after returning is a great convenience.

THE VACATIONS are about five weeks at Midsummer and three weeks in the winter, when all children are required to be removed.

( 4 )

If any child has been brought in contact with any infectious disorder during the vacation, notice is at once to be given to the Superintendent, and his judgment obtained before the child returns.

The following are the regulations for the visits of parents and friends to children in the School:—

- 1.—That no visits be paid to children on the first day of the week, except in the event of sickness.
- 2.—That no children go home or be absent from the School on a visit to their friends, without sufficient reason assigned, and permission first obtained from the Committee or sub-Committee.
- 3.—That no children be allowed to be absent from the School during school hours oftener than one day in the half-year.
- 4.—That no visits be paid to the children within six weeks of the reopening of the School after a vacation, and that no interruption to school hours take place by such visits for three months from the same.
- 5.—That children do not go out unless under the care of a near relative, except in the case of such as are seldom invited.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—Two Scholarships of £30 each for Boys and two of similar value for Girls are offered at Midsummer. These are awarded at the discretion of the Committee on the results of the regular examination. Full particulars as to qualifications, &c., can be obtained of the Superintendent.

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SUPERINTENDENT.

GEORGE FREDERICK LINNEY.

*Mistress of the family.*—LUCY LINNEY.

*Housekeeper.*—EMMA GRAY.

TEACHERS.

Boys. { E. ARTHUR WILLIAMS, B.A., Lond.  
FRANK R. ARUNDEL (Master on Duty).  
WILLIAM HENRY POLLARD, B.A., Lond.  
And two others.

Girls. { ANNE G. BROWN.  
ADA L. ARUNDEL.  
And two others.

*Fifth Class (Boys and Girls).*—HELEN LEWIS.

**From the 1979  
Avenue  
6<sup>th</sup> Form  
Biology Field Trip  
to North Yorkshire**



**NUFFIELD ADVANCED BIOLOGY**

**AN INVESTIGATION TO TEST THE HYPOTHESIS THAT ELEVEN 6<sup>2</sup> BIOLOGISTS ON A BIOLOGY FIELD TRIP SHOW NO PREFERENCE FOR BIOLOGY FIELD WORK OR PLAY:**

**Procedure:**

1. Place Paul, Erik, Richard, Joel, John, Stephen, Georgie, Julie, Iyabo, Jane and Jenni in a minibus.
2. Place Martin at the wheel and let him take them to Yorkshire.
3. Allow Denby and family to follow/overtake/get lost.
4. Install them in the concrete choice chamber at Friends' School Great Ayton and allow them to settle down.
5. Take them out in the daytime and allow them to do field work or mess about.
6. Bring them back in the evening and allow them to amuse themselves in the lab, cook and eat, watch T.V., sleep, go out, or work on their field notes.
7. Using Georgie and John as controls for the "hard-working" and "non-working" keep a record of the length of time spent by each creature in the work and play.
8. Subject results to analytical, statistical tests.

**Conclusion:**

An attempt was obviously made to do some work, however the attitude of the group showed the main object to be pleasure. This came in many different forms; notably playing in rivers and heather bouncing. The biologists will certainly remember the trip. Jane's ants and non-setting jelly, Erik's "Whitby mud" (being in it), Richard's attraction to sleep and fishing, Julie's pancake, gypsy toast and pilchard breakfast, Joel's fascination for the carnivorous sundews, Jenni trying to catch sheep on the moor, Paul's tendency to jump into any nearby water, Georgie's seaweed, Iyabo's cream cakes, Joel's loss of a boot in the Whitby mud, John's and Stephen's willingness to partake in any out of the ordinary activity, Martin's "Duck Song", Denby and family and dog eating winkles.

The biologists would like to thank Denby and Martin for all their help, without which this trip would not be possible.

Paul Abrey and Julie Foster 62



### ***The School in 1903***

Dieter Hopkin recently got in touch with the OSA with these images from his wife's family, some of whom were Quakers in Derbyshire.

We have recently received scans of small glass plates taken in 1903, courtesy of the Rosemary Bower collection.



Believe it or not, girls at Friends' School were playing cricket in 1903!



Above: You can just make out the new swimming pool built in 1902 past to the gym. No biology lab, but two fives courts which were later replaced by the 3 storey classroom block and boys' changing rooms.

Below: Boys in the gym, which did not change much until the sports hall was built in 1984. Two boys giving an indication of their uniform in 1903.



### News from Old Scholars & Staff

We have news from Stephen Lytton (née Arpad De Dioszeghy, YG 1984) and Rob Lowe writing about his grandmother Helen Dickinson (YG not on database).

#### **Stephen Lytton (née Arpad De Dioszeghy, YG 1984)**



*Stephen and Vinnie*

Stephen Lytton, who attended Friends' School in the early 1980s as Arpad De Dioszeghy, has recently been in touch with the Old Scholars' with a series of interesting emails about his life since Friends' which I have compiled into one section here. In Stephen's own words "make a cup of tea and take a seat".

Stephen's time at Friends', by his own

account, was "particularly undistinguished". His father had come to England from Hungary in 1956 after fighting on the streets of Budapest in the Hungarian Revolution against the Soviet Union. Stephen recalls being teased mercilessly for his name. He was also profoundly dyslexic at a time when dyslexia was not understood and was regarded, as Stephen puts it, as the "stupid boys' disease". Most of his teachers, he says, thought he was "as thick as two short planks".

Yet he could read fluently and devoured books, spending hours in the school library. One he remembers especially is Siegfried Sassoon's *Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man*, which he still describes as "quite the most aesthetically exquisite work of classic English literature".

He remembers John Dickinson (Staff 1977-1997, died 2011), former Head of English, who "in the nicest possible way thought I was absolutely hopeless". JD could never quite understand how Stephen could read aloud fluently and devour books, yet be unable to put anything down on paper.

Stephen was keen to give JD a copy of his own book, partly as a gesture of thanks and partly, perhaps, as proof that some of the teaching had lodged "albeit subconsciously". The result was *Diary of a Czar: Vinnie's Odyssey*, the first in a trilogy. Stephen describes it as a story for readers "from 8 to 80", centred on Vinnie, a Vizsla hound who grows up among roaming Cossack horsemen in the frozen Siberian wilderness. The book follows Vinnie's journey from an arrogant

youngster to Alpha dog, learning about leadership, responsibility and compassion, and forming an enduring friendship with a defeated rival. Along the way, he also bonds closely with the chief Cossack, who sees himself as a guardian not only of his people but of the animals of the Taiga forest.

“I wouldn’t be worthy to wash Siegfried Sassoon’s feet,” Stephen says, “but a published book is still a book.”

After leaving school, Stephen went on to a long career playing polo, which he characterises as “riding horses at 40mph chasing a small white ball”. After retiring from the sport, and driven by a lifelong commitment to animal welfare, especially horses and dogs, he attempted a charity walk around the coast of the UK with his dog Czar, aiming to raise funds for an animal sanctuary. Lockdown brought that journey to a halt.



*Vinnie in front of Diary of a Czar in Waterstones*

It was during lockdown, on the suggestion of a stranger on a beach and encouraged by family members, Stephen began writing for the first time since school. Despite “appalling spelling, backwards grammar and a complete lack of meaningful punctuation”, he was told what he had written was “beautiful”. With editorial help, this became *Diary of a Czar: Vinnie’s Odyssey*, with sales supporting animal welfare causes. Stephen has since written eight books and remains, as he puts it, “still profoundly dyslexic”, though “thank goodness for technology”.

Old Scholars who would like to read *Diary of a Czar* can contact Stephen directly for an electronic copy by logging into the website and using the “Find Friends” function. Proceeds from sales continue to go towards animal welfare.



*Vinnie outside the reimagination of Friends'*

### **Rob Lowe on Helen Dickinson**

Rob Lowe got in touch with the Old Scholars' Association with photos of his grandmother, Helen Dickinson's, time at Friends'. Helen was at school at the turn of the century. Her Quaker roots can be traced back to the Darby iron masters of Coalbrookdale. Her father, an artist from Crockham Hill, Kent, settled in Tenby, West Wales, where they had a family business. Later in life she married Ossie Morgan who became a headmaster at Tenby council school. During WWII, their home, alongside their own four children, became a sanctuary taking in eight evacuee children and an evacuee dog called Gypsy. Helen's compassion and community dedication earned her a BEM. Her story reflects a commitment to helping others, rooted in her family's values and personal strength.



*Helen before she attended Friends' and a swimming medal she received at school*

A letter from Helen Dickinson to her father requesting a pocket knife and a magnifying glass.

FRIENDS' SCHOOL,  
SAFFRON WALDEN.

Dear Mother

I wrote to grandma yesterday, dollie is lying in my box on my shawl she looks so pretty and lots of the bid girls look at her and say Oh what a pretty bonnet and oh what a pretty doll. Classplaces will be next week Oh I have got the growing pain. I am very happy here and Hilda Dell is so kind to me

there is not ~~no~~ any news today but have you made my scout best dress for if you have not I can do without it because it is getting colder. Please ask Father when he has plenty of money to buy me a little pocket knife for botany in the third class and will you send my ~~my~~ magnifying glass for I wont look at the sun or I wont burn paper with it.

With love Helen



Group photo of Mr and Mrs Walker and possibly their family



Girls 2nd class 1905. (Helen looking a little sad far left to the right of Miss Sharp seated)



Above: Girls 1st class 1908 (Helen kneeling second left front row beside her teacher Miss Fairbrother)



Above: Teachers including Mr and Mrs Walker in the centre and Mr Roundtree seated next to them. 1904



To the right: Girls 2nd Class 1903 (Helen sat at the front to the left of the girl with crossed legs)



*Top: Girls dancing on the front lawn. 1898. Helen isn't in this photo but the girl in the white dress looking over her shoulder is Helen's sister Jennie Maude Dickinson. Bottom: Chemistry lab (no date)*



**THE FRIENDS' SCHOOL, SAFFRON WALDEN. SWIMMING BATH.**  
*Above: Girls drilling 1905. Below: Swimming Bath (No date)*

## Reunions

We're delighted to report that the 1972 Year Group held a reunion from 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and Biddy Vousden (née Davey) has sent the following report:

The '72 year group have been meeting every three years for 21 years now, ever since our 50<sup>th</sup> birthday year, and inspired by the wonderful 1960s reunion led by Tom Robinson. This year we met, for the second time, at the Nightingale Centre, at Great Hucklow in the Peak District. Stunning scenery, of course, for long hill walks. And shorter walks for those of us feeling less energetic. Some of us visited Buxton, a grand old spa town with an interesting history, a beautiful glass pavilion complete with hothouse plants and swimming pool, a small museum built in the old Pump Room, a warm spa water drinking fountain, stained glass everywhere and congenial coffee houses.

Our evenings were filled with wine, cake, laughter and love, and catching up with everyone's lives, both Now and Then. We were also treated to some fascinating talks/slideshows: a Japanese Polar Expedition of 1910-12, a video diary of a small team's Atlantic crossing, an introduction to Philosophy, yoga sessions, a workshop on how to do cryptic crossword, news of the new incarnation of Bamford, the Quaker community we visited last time, co-founded by one of our number, but closed and sold in the intervening years. Meeting for Worship was a highlight of Sunday morning for those involved, a deep and affirming experience.

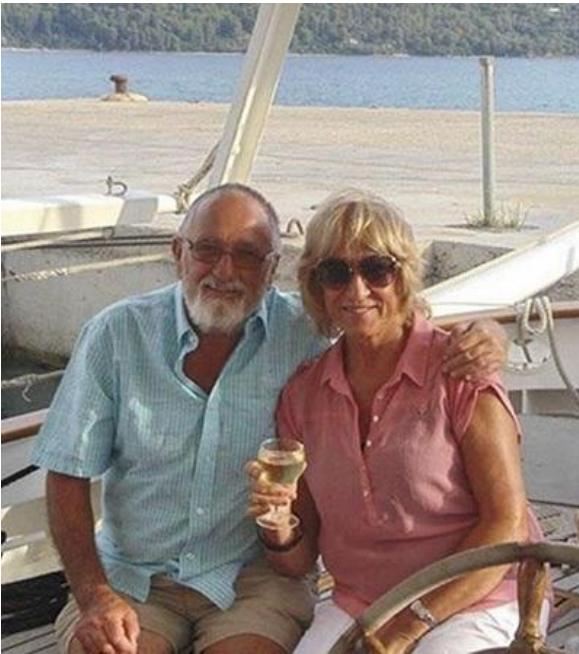
Thank you once again to Cathy and Celia for organising another lovely event, and to the Nightingale Centre staff for keeping us well fed and watered throughout.



## Obituaries

We are sad to announce the following deaths since our last newsletter: Robin Lamb (YG 1961), Cynthia Green (née Vaughan, YG 1954), Lucy Robson (née Finzi, YG 1982), Sarah Ninot (née Wright, YG 1979) and Rajan Chetsingh (YG 1952). We have only recently received the sad news of the deaths of Lucy, Sarah and Rajan and so obituaries for them will be included online in the near future and in the next newsletter.

We have also included information about the party celebrating Sarah's life organised by the 1979 Year Group. I have only received longer obituaries for those I've included below and so if Old Scholars have any information they would like to share in order to write a longer obituary for any deceased Old Scholar, or notify the OSA about an Old Scholar's death not recorded, could they email me at [fsswosa@gmail.com](mailto:fsswosa@gmail.com). Longer obituaries are available on the Old Scholars website [here](#).



### **Robin Lamb (YG 1961)**

Robin (Larry) Lamb who was at Friends' School from 1954 to 1961. Dennis Procter Hutchinson (YG 1961) has written and collected the following testimonies of Robin's life, which are available in full online.

Robin was born in 1943, his sister Ruth (Butler, née Lamb, YG 1962) in 1944 and Alison (YG 1966) in 1948 and was brought up in Maldon, Essex from the age of three or four years old where his parents, later, ran a YHA hostel. Robin joined FSSW in September 1954. I was at school with him thus my involvement with others of his contemporaries in some words below about his life. He and I had two common interests swimming and sailing.

He went to Friends' as an Essex Scholar and after spent two years at Loughborough where he studied electrical engineering. On leaving he started work as a GPO engineer then moved to English Electric in research and development.

Robin asked one summer if I would like to join a week's sailing at his parents' youth hostel which I very happily accepted. There followed many seasons of sailing for a week or more on the Blackwater estuary. We and our course members really learnt to sail. We had a few blue Board of Trade life jackets which we never wore. There was no rescue launch in attendance and our dinghies, The Bert, The Daddy and the like, carried cast iron ballast and would sink if not treated properly. Robin introduced me to sailing and thus three generations of our family for which we are hugely grateful. One night of the week we would all sail down the estuary to Bradwell where we would stay the night at the hostel there. We were always hungry, however, Mrs Lamb gave precedence to instructors for seconds at dinner, a dizzy height I achieved in my second year.

Back at school, Robin was involved in arranging the swimming match fixtures against other local schools and being of the swimming club we could use the pool early Sunday mornings, our special privilege. Robin had the stamina and upper body strength that I lacked. We were not always able to field a full team for the events offered so one time we had no one for the backstroke event. Robin negotiated the presence of our secret weapon, a tiny little girl, Judy

Errington (née Watson, YG 1962) and of course the all boys Bishops Stortford College agreed with a smirk. She must have had an outboard motor somewhere and destroyed her opposition.

Robin was one of the most exceptional athletes of our time at FSSW; less spectacular than the dry land athletes but possessing a perfect front crawl and an amazing final burst of extra speed despite his asthma. Swimming took him to Loughborough, and John Ashby (YG 1961) visited with the Leeds swimming team where they were comprehensively beaten in every event by Robin and his fellow paddlers. Later Robin was a member of the Leicestershire water polo team.

Robin's sporting accomplishments included competing in the 440yds (now 400m) freestyle in the British National Swimming Championships (1962 but possibly 1961); playing Water Polo for Clacton in the early 1970s and being a rower and lifeguard for the Walton Pier to Clacton Pier swimming race in the early 1970s, a race which was often used as a training ground for Channel swimmers.

On June 14th 1975, Robin and his wife Helen moved to Eindhoven in the Netherlands where Robin worked for Phillips International as a technical author for three years before settling in the UK 1978 eventually in Wokingham. Robin retired in 2008 when he and Helen set about their sailing adventure.

They had developed a love of Greece over the years, and since the early 80s had visited the country at least once a year to backpack around the islands of the Aegean and Ionian Seas. They lived aboard for about six months each year from 2008 to 2019. Cruising the Ionian is charming. He was intending to sell his boat, Sundowner, at the tenth year, but the family rose up at the idea, and told him to hold off while everyone came out for a last trip. Robin gave an interview about his life in Greece for [Sail World Cruising](#) (who are happy for their work to be used and some of which you will find here).

Sadly his beloved Helen died in 2024 leaving Robin with one surviving sister, seven children, numerous grandchildren and great children. If calculations are correct he had 28 grandchildren and possibly 18 great grandchildren (the number has risen slightly recently, so there may be more great grandchildren)! Robin was a family man in the best possible sense and he will be terribly missed by his closest and the rest of us.

### ***Cynthia Green (née Vaughan, YG 1954)***

We did not receive any account of Cynthia's life. She died in December 2025 and was at Friends' from 1947 to 1955. She was a life member of the Old Scholars' Association.

This brings the OS Winter Newsletter to a close. If you no longer wish to be contacted by us, please email [fsswosa@gmail.com](mailto:fsswosa@gmail.com).

In Friendship,  
Roland (YG 2010)  
Secretary to the Old Scholars' Association