

ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

The Old Georgians Association



June 2024

Welcome from the Headmistress

Helen Barton

Georgian Newsletter – Summer 2024

“Service beyond self” has been a key part of StG’s life right from its conception in 1907. As an organisation we are blessed to have members of our present and extended family who have served our school, by giving up their time to work alongside us, by their financial giving or by supporting us in many other ways.

Ian Hemmin, who sadly passed away in May this year, was one of those people. As President of The Georgian Association, he freely gave his time and energy over many years. During his extended Presidency he encouraged and cajoled both young and old alike. He always attended School Prize Giving showing support for students and staff alike who had ploughed their way through the public exam season, celebrating both the grit and determination shown by some students as well as those amazing outcomes. The other highlight of the year for him was the Old Georgians Carol Service, where he dutifully always undertook one of the nine readings. At the grand old age of 90 he had seen many changes take place within our school, but he constantly recognised that the heart of the school never changed, the Christian message was still central; the traditions were maintained and how we encourage our young people to look beyond themselves in their service to others. On a personal note Ian provided me with support; encouragement and the odd (very nicely phrased) challenge. He will be sorely missed.

Ian loved a good school event, and there are plenty going on this half term that you can be involved in. The Georgians Association will be out in force at the School Summer Fete on Saturday 29th June. If you would like a walk down memory lane we will be offering school tours and a special talk on the history of the Chapel. It would be great if you could seek out our gazebo and make contact with us. We will also be present on Sunday the 30th for our Founders Day Service. After the Founders service we will serve tea and coffee (and perhaps even a slice of cake!) and hold our short, but very important AGM.

It would be lovely to see you, an opportunity to touch base with your old school.

Kind Regards

Miss H. J. Barton, Headmistress



Updates from the Development Office

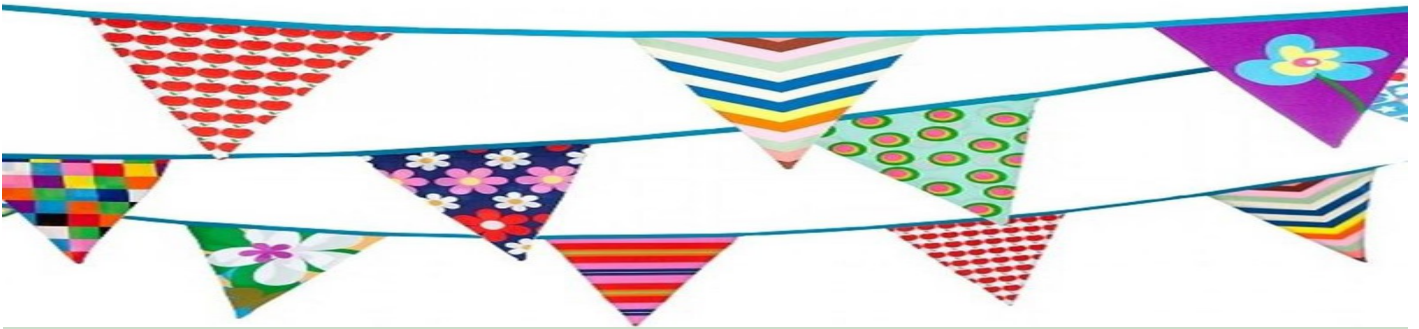
Founders Weekend 2024

Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th June 2024

Saturday—School Tours & Summer Fete - Look out for an opportunity to sing the school Hymn!

12.00pm—4.00pm. The Old Georgians cricket match will also be taking place.

Sunday—Founders Chapel & AGM 10.00am



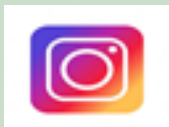
The Old Georgians

We are pleased to say engagement within the Old Georgian community is growing, if you have a story to share or would like to let us know what you are up to know the please email:-

development@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk



Georgians Harpenden



oldgeorgians100



Sign up to our Old Georgian website

Updates from the Development Office

Reunion

Were you part of the school year that started in September 1968, took 'O' levels in 1973 and 'A' levels in 1975?

*Next year it will be 50 years since most of us left the school, so to mark the occasion we are planning a reunion for summer 2025. Plans are at an early stage for a lunchtime BBQ on **Saturday 19th July 2025**. Whether you left in 1973, 1975 or at some other stage, you would be very welcome to join in.*

If you'd like to have more details as they become available, please email chris.dorling@outlook.com or bettine@bettine.co.uk to let us know.

And if you are in touch with anyone else from the year, please let them know about it.



On the Grapevine

Tragedy by Candlelight

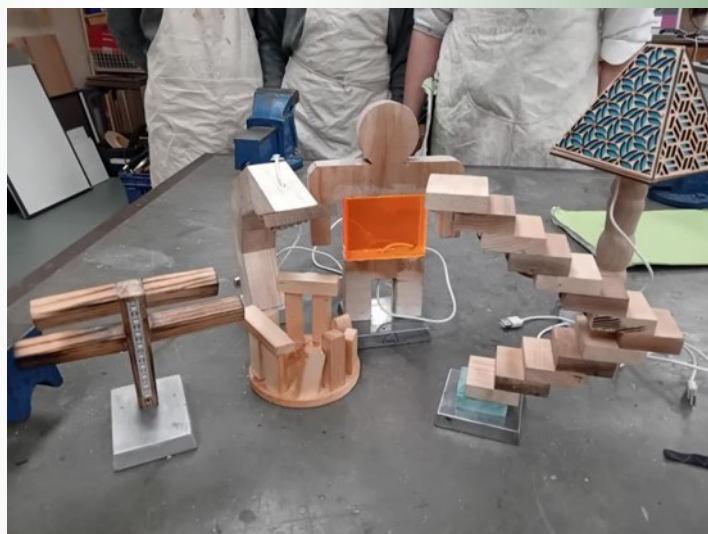
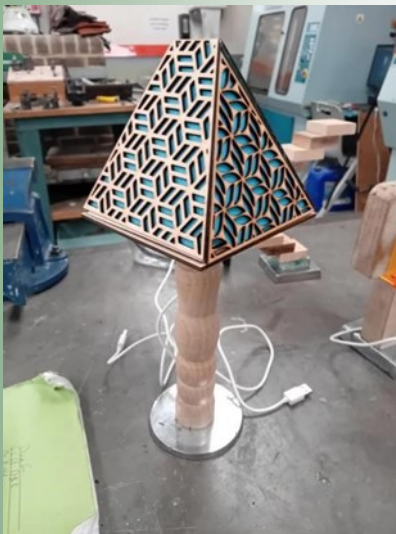
A group of A' Level English Literature students, accompanied by Mrs Holton-Gaus and Ms Farr, were lucky enough to visit the Sam Wana maker playhouse at The Globe Theatre, to watch a magical, candle-light production of "The Duchess of Malfi" by John Webster. We were all very impressed by the interpretation, which brought one of our A' Level texts to life in a vibrant, powerful way. Our fantastic students were, as always, a credit to the school.

Ms F & Mrs H-G



Year 10 Technology Scrapheap challenge

This has produced some stunning creations like these two.



On the Grapevine

England's Gill, 17, breaks 45-year-old 800m record



Congratulations to Phoebe!

Phoebe Gill (Year 12) broke a 45 year old 800m record. She ran it in 1 minute 57.86 seconds in Belfast on Sunday. She broke the European Under-18 record of 1:59.65 set by East Germany's Marion Geissler-Hübner 45 years ago.

Phoebe's time moved her to joint second place in this year's world 800m rankings with only Ethiopia's Tsigie Duguma (1:57.73) having run faster in 2024.

Well done, Phoebe - a great achievement.

[Phoebe Gill: English athlete, 17, clocks stunning 1:57.86 800m in Belfast - BBC Sport](#)

More names for the Old Library Wall

We have updated our board to mark the changeover from Captains for 2023-2024 and the new ones for 2024-2025. It is quite special to have your name up there forever along with every post holder since 1907. The names in gold are the school captains killed in the war: every males post holder from 1909-1916 inclusive.



On the Grapevine

Florence Art Tour 2024

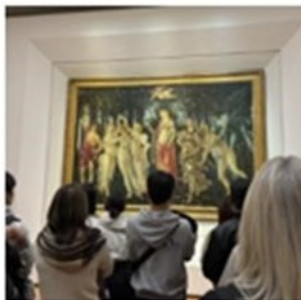
The school Art tour to Florence, Italy, was an unforgettable experience. The trip provided an opportunity for students to immerse themselves in the rich artistic and cultural heritage of one of the world's most beautiful cities. One of our students, Freya Barker, documented the trip in film- this will be in the newsletter next week!



One of the highlights of the tour was undoubtedly the visit to the Duomo of the cathedral Santa Maria del Fiore. The architecture of the cathedral left a lasting impression on everyone. On our first morning we started with the ascent up the famous dome with its elaborate paintings and ingenious herringbone brick work, to enjoy views of the beautiful city. At L'Accademia, students had the privilege of seeing Michelangelo's masterpiece, David, up close. The sheer scale and beauty of the sculpture is impressive. The visit to San Marco Monastery offered students the chance to study the works of Fra Angelico, a master of the early Renaissance period. On our second evening we took a night walk around the city to visit the ancient Ponte Vecchio and Fontana del Gallo, a fountain depicting a mythical story about a Florentine boar, the original was a Roman marble found buried near Rome and gifted to the Medici family in the 1500s by the Pope. We rubbed the nose of the statue to ensure our return to Florence!

At the Uffizi gallery, students studied Botticelli's iconic paintings, including "The Birth of Venus" and "Primavera" along with the rest of the Medici collection including Renaissance and ancient Roman sculptures. The vibrancy and beauty of these treasures sparked discussions among the group, as we delved into the symbolism and techniques employed by the artists and marvelled at the skill of ancient civilisations. Finally, the tour concluded with a visit to Santa Maria Novella, where students were able to marvel at the stunning 14th-century frescoes adorning the walls of the church. The intricate details and vivid colours of these frescoes served as a reminder of the enduring legacy of Italian Renaissance art. Of course, no trip to Florence would be complete without indulging in some of the city's famous food. We visited the renowned central food market, a favourite of Jamie Oliver, to sample gelato, pizza and other delights.

The school Art tour to Florence was a resounding success, offering students an opportunity to immerse themselves in the beauty and history of this ancient city.



On the Grapevine

Year 10 & 12 Oxford trip/Debating update

It was a pleasure and a privilege to take some of our school debaters to Oxford yesterday.



A packed day began with a guided tour of the city, including a campus tour of St Catherine's College. Followed by a Q&A with St George's Alumni Ruby S-F. We then visited the Pitt Rivers museum to get students thinking about the evening's debate motion: 'this house believes British museums are not very British'. After dinner, we then had a workshop and a tour of the union. The event was capped off by watching a fascinating debate in the world's most famous debate chamber.

Jamie Ellis

Deputy Director of Sixth Form Education

Old Georgians



Oliver Alden OG

I finished at St George's in 2018 I believe, I studied psychology, biology and philosophy and ethics at A level and I have very fond memories of the school and think it was a fantastic education.

After school finished I went on to obtain a Bachelors in Viral and Microbiology from Exeter University during Covid times....

I have since been working in the Metropolitan police service as a Detective Constable and that has been a crazy journey. I've experienced a huge amount, and got involved in things that I never thought I would. I'd be interested in talking to a few students who maybe express a desire to work in emergency services, particularly the police, and share my experiences with them.

I have recently resigned from the service to start my new career in housing development. Despite this, what I have learned in the police will stay with me forever and I think may inspire a few students to pursue similar avenues.

Oliver

News from our Old Georgians



OG Saul Wordsworth

Dear OG Development,

As an old Georgian (1984-1991), I thought the school would be interested in a podcast series I have created about diaries my late father, the Fleet Street journalist Christopher Wordsworth, left behind. The diaries are voiced by another OG, Chris Smith (stage name Chris Porter), also 84-91.

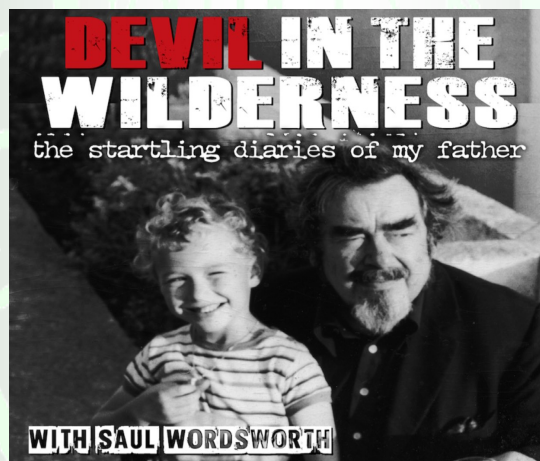
Along with the diaries, the series also touches on life in Harpenden - including my own time at St George's.

My father, Christopher Wordsworth, was a literary critic and sports writer for The Observer and The Guardian from the 1960s to the 1990s. When he died in 1998 he left behind unread diaries that chart his post war years living in Snowdonia where he was trying (and failing) to write The Great Novel. There are clues in the diaries that he may have killed someone in a murky past he routinely touches on.

The six-part series, Devil in the Wilderness, is produced by Paul Kobrak (The Louis Theroux Podcast) who happens to live in St Albans. There is also a soundtrack album featuring original music by me that accompanies the series.

This interview in The Guardian might help with any background or quotes:

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2023/oct/15/the-wolf-at-my-throat-observer-writer-christopher-wordsworths-diaries-reveal-troubled-life>



Old Georgians

Congratulations to OGs Lucy Evans and Rachel Ball

Who have been selected for the England Under 20 Lacrosse team to play in the World Championships in Hong Kong in August. This was them back in Year 7...



Congratulations to OG Anna Patten

Who made her debut for the Republic of Ireland football team over the Easter holiday. Anna was going to be speaking at one of our prizegivings in the summer but sadly she has had to postpone, as she has an international fixture.



Old Georgian News

Super Saturday 2024

Thank you to all those OG's that came to see us at Super Saturday, it was great to see you all.



Miss Barton & Sue MacKenzie



OG's Lucy Foster (Garside) & Libby Garside



OG's Scarlett Cotter & Tobi Balogun



Old Georgian News

Obituaries:

Ian Hemmin 1933-2024—President of the Old Georgian Association

Ian's connection with the School started at birth. He was born in Harpenden whilst his mother was on leave from India as she had come here so his older sister, Margaret, could start school at St. George's as a boarder. It followed therefore that he was christened in the School Chapel by no less a person than Dr. Grant. He spent his first years in India but when his father retired a few years before the war the family settled in Harpenden. At the tender age of four he started at the Montessori school, where the children all had to have an afternoon nap in little beds. He spent all his schooldays at St. George's, chosen by his parents because it was an unorthodox school, being co-ed and having both day pupils and boarders. Here he acquired his love of music and singing as a chorister in the Chapel Choir and numerous productions of Gilbert & Sullivan. He had an inspirational music teacher in Duggie Dawn and as a trustee of the Duggie Dawn Memorial Fund he raised enough money to provide the School with the beautiful grand piano now in the Old Library.

Schooldays during the war created more unorthodox precedents. He recalled how he learnt DIY skills helping one of the masters with the electrics and other maintenance jobs. Also the line painted round the bath to ensure that not too much hot water was used. Coal was precious and kept in that cellar beside the entrance to Aim Higher. On another occasion the older boys all went harvesting potatoes on the Common which had been cleared and ploughed to grow food. His schooldays were happy ones and his engineering skills were nurtured in the Mechanical and Engineering Society which indulged in the construction of things that would make Health & Safety today shudder in horror! It did however lead to his going to Imperial College to read Civil Engineering.

Subsequently, he was called up for National Service where he became an officer in the Royal Engineers, the Sappers. Some of the training must have rubbed off as he was an excellent shot and also knew how to defuse bombs! Skills he rarely practiced. On demobilisation he applied to Costain Civil Engineering for a posting overseas. His first job to Nigeria, was on an isolated site in the jungle on the edge of the sea - a challenge, both engineering-wise and personal. There followed another contract in northwest Argentina in the foothills of the Andes on the construction of a large earth dam and hydro scheme. This involved him in learning to speak Spanish in which he became fluent. A short secondment to Buenos Aires sealed his fate as it was here that he met Dilys. A year on and they were married and she joined him on site. Cars were scarce luxuries but they acquired a very elderly World War II jeep which would never have passed an MOT! Things fell off it, including the rear wheel on one occasion, and it had no handbrake. They used to escape whenever they got the chance to explore - unmade gravel roads, hairpin bends and magnificent scenery. After a spell in the UK the opportunity to go to Hong Kong, together with wife and two children came up to build the first of the crossharbour tunnels.

He had already been involved in the early use of computers in civil engineering when he joined the tendering team looking for work overseas. He would travel abroad to assess what was involved and find out what the resources would be before tendering could be done. He made many very interesting trips off the tourist trail to India, Pakistan, the Middle East and South America, including the Falkland Islands – before the war.

Old Georgian News

Retirement gave them the chance to travel. A sort of love affair with the Middle East meant that he and Dilys explored places that were unusual at the time, and totally impossible today such as Syria, Jordan, the Holy Land, Libya and Oman as well as a trip along the length of the Nile. Further afield they went to China and India, where he traced his father's life in Calcutta. A trip to New Zealand found them staying with another OG from his schooldays. Return trips to Argentina led them travelling down the Andes, and to Peru and Mexico - ere greatly enhanced by being able to speak the local language.

Ian had two enduring loves in his life. One was sailing, mostly dinghy sailing and he thought nothing of getting thoroughly wet in so doing. Music was his other great love, particularly singing – being a tenor he was always sought after. He sang in a couple of London choirs, then after retiring both of them sang in the Hardynges choir and MUSSOC. He started St. Mary's occasional choir and being short of a conductor one year stepped in and took over, eventually going on a conducting course. He even took on MUSSOC for a term when their conductor was away.

In the 1970s he was persuaded by the energetic and charismatic Chippie Green to join the OGA committee. The Association was going through a rough patch and together with Terry Rainer OG they re-invigorated it. With help from Dilys he took over the Newsletters which involved many hours of preparation and a new look publication. A special reunion weekend was established to combine with a Singing Weekend starting on Friday evening with the school providing a lasagne supper. Saturday saw rehearsals and socialising, with a concert in the Chapel at six after the conclusion of the Cricket Match. Dinner followed, sometimes with entertainment from other Old Georgians and on Sunday the Chapel service with the weekend choir taking part. Conductors alternated between the current Music Master and invited conductors including a memorable occasion when Sir David Wilcocks came. The reunion expanded and for some years they had an Art workshop arranged by Chippie. In addition Pam Weatherly would open up the Archives, a source of endless fascination. Up to 200 people would visit over the weekend. He and Dilys worked inordinately hard to put on this event. For many years he also kept the OGA address list which he had now put on a computer base. He was subsequently made President of the OGA, a post he loved and which entitled him to keep close links with the School over the years.



Old Georgian News

What Donations help Fund

With out the continued help and support form our Georgian community we would not be able to fund some of the traditions that we take for granted here at St George's School.

We continue to line the walls of the Old Library with the names of the school captains over the years. With out continued support and donations this would not be possible.



The Old Georgian Gazebo was purchased for a meeting point for OG's to gather at events and for a current students to be made aware that the school values it's Alumni.



Make a Donation

How you can contribute to the future of St George's

If you would like to make a donation, please contact the development office who will be more than happy to assist you OR make a donation using the details below.

Development Office,
St George's School,
Harpenden, HERTS, AL5 4TD
Tel 01582 765477

Barclays Bank A/C 03517586
Sort Code: 20-03-62

or development@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk



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The Old Georgians Association website — <https://eu.ptly.com/uk/>

