



# The Old Coventrian

The newsletter of the King Henry VIII School former pupils association DECEMBER 2021 Issue 30

## Message From Your Chairman

Welcome to another edition of the newsletter and as you have come to expect, it contains the usual mix that while it may not exactly be “all human life”, it does at least manage to give a reasonable representation of some of it. If we weren't living in such strange times, there would have been more to tell you about. Perhaps we are heading into a new normal with events being arranged and then cancelled (the Dean Close Sixes and the Crackley Run) or just run with lower numbers (the Annual Dinner).

But we have still achieved a few things and continue to organize events – and planning for next term is up and running. So what have we managed this term? We have the Annual Dinner, the Bowls, and the Heritage Weekend, all of which have articles and there are also bits on some of the events that couldn't be held. The other larger item in this newsletter is the second part of Adrian Smith's item about Philip Larkin.

Then of course we also have the obituaries. While 2020 seemed relatively quiet, 2021 appears to have seen quite a few of our membership pass away – but at least they are recorded here. The obituaries will only give a hint of what these people were like in real life, especially if you didn't know them, but from reading about them you will see that many demonstrate that certain peculiarly unique “Henry'sness” that seems to characterise so many former pupils.

Lastly I must express again my thanks to the people who have organized the events, got in touch with people and tried to make things happen, and those who have written what you are reading and everyone else who has contributed to this publication. I hope you may all have a happy and healthy Festive Season and a much better New Year.

**Paul Fernandez-Montes**  
OCA Chair  
Class of '73

## Message from Phil Dearden, Headmaster & OCA President

Dear Old Coventrian,

It was a great relief to return to school in September without the ‘bubbling’ (that is year groups kept separate from each other) we had to follow for the previous academic year. There was a sense of a return to normality (even if no one actually knows what that is anymore) in that we could once again have zoneless areas around school, and co-curricular activities and sport could restart.

On the Covid perspective, we have remained vigilant, ensuring that we protect all of our community. Face coverings have been worn by all transiting through the corridors of the school buildings, a measure which has no doubt contributed to our very low number of cases, especially compared to local schools. In fact, the recent increase in measures nationally only brought everyone else into line with our own risk assessment.

Prizegiving took place in September and we were delighted to invite Dan Edge as our guest speaker. Dan, who is a multi-award-winning Film and TV Producer (having BAFTAs and Emmys to his name) spoke superbly well and you can actually watch his presentation, together with the rest of the event on our You Tube channel by clicking [here](#).

Otherwise, highlights this term have been our combined 1<sup>st</sup> XV beating Solihull in front of the lights at Coventry Rugby Club; an Autumn Concert (our first ‘live’ and non-restricted public performance in over 18 months); House Drama (our first Covid Omicron-restricted no-parent event – with no small amount of déjà vu or irony); having over 300 pupils sit for the Entrance Examinations; Vex Robotics successes; Computing and Coding successes and finally, quite simply as

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- Larkin, Jazz and the Motor City part 2
- Heritage Weekend
- ...and more

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I've said above, staff just being able to teach in classrooms not stuck in 2m zones trying to understand what pupils are saying because they're all wearing face coverings! Hopefully, January will not bring a return to previous measures...

I haven't mentioned the merger yet. I'm sure there will be some mention of it somewhere else in this newsletter. From a day-to-day perspective here in school, it has been very much business as usual. A new Chair of Governors and Principal have been appointed and there is a change in approach. The staff restructure proposals have been drawn back and we now look forward to appointing staff into permanent leadership positions in due course. Swallows is also back on the table for a reopening in September 2023, which I'm sure will be of great relief to many of you.

I'll finish by saying Happy Christmas to you all! I hope that you and your families stay safe, and all the best heading into 2022!

**Phil Dearden**  
Acting Headmaster

## Heritage Open Day 2021

Once again, the School's Alumni Office and the Old Coventrians' Association combined forces to provide Heritage Open Day Tours of the King Henry VIII School site.

According to the Heritage Open Days website: "In 1991 the Council of Europe and the European Commission set up European Heritage Days to raise appreciation for Europe's rich and diverse cultural assets and their need for care and protection. The central principle was as simple as it was compelling: to throw open the doors to historic monuments and buildings, in particular those normally closed to the public. Today, they are held annually in September in 50 signatory states to the European Cultural Convention. Each country running it in their own way, the festival not only highlights the dazzling diversity of Europe's heritage, but also its intercultural links."



## Old Coventrians' Events

2021/22

**All events are subject to postponement or cancellation dependent on lockdown restrictions - please check online for updates.**

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December, 7pm**  
**KHVIII School Christmas Concert**  
(the OCA Choir will now *not* be involved due to Covid restrictions)

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2021**  
**Crackley Run CANCELLED** —see page 13

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 4.30pm**  
**Class of 2014 Reunion**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2022 (date tbc)**  
**OCA vs KHVIII Netball match**

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2022**  
**Classes of 2003, 2004 and 2005 Reunion**  
**Dinner**

Diary Dates

## Committee Meetings 2022

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 7pm**  
(provisional, date to be confirmed)

**Subsequent meetings including the AGM also TBC**



Our tours were led by former staff members, Peter Huxford and Peter Lockyer, and by current staff, Helen Cooper and Rob Philips, who all received fantastic support and assistance from a number of volunteers, including: Keith Bushnell, Dave Butler, Jane Earp, Paul Fernandez-Montes, Pat Head, Catherine Kaye, Jacky Matthews and Jeremy Thomas. Two prefects, Angela and Emi, also turned out on a Saturday to represent the School. It would not have been such a fun day without the support of such a large and enthusiastic team of volunteers.

The tours focus on the old part of the School site and provide information about the history of the School back to

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## Merger Update - End of an Error?

The Merger, as originally presented, is over – dead and buried. The plan to shift all senior school teaching to Bablake and keep the Warwick Road site just for juniors will not happen. Swallows (the former Cov Prep site) has temporarily closed but is now unlikely to be sold. We welcome these changes wholeheartedly. Mrs. Julia McNaney, Chair of Governors, and many of the others involved in the original decision, taken back in January 2020, have finally gone, and while some of those responsible remain, it seems the governing body is slowly emerging into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with a new purpose and as a new team.

We now have a new Chair of Governors in Ian Dunn – the current Provost of Coventry University. He started in September, seems to be making lots of positive moves, and as such, is very welcome. We hope to have an interview with him in our next issue. A new Principal, Chris Staley, has also been appointed to oversee the two schools over and above the two head teachers, though how exactly this will work remains to be seen, especially as he doesn't formally take up his post until later in 2022.

If it had not been for the Merger proposals, changes such as these would never have really been examined by former pupils. Issues such as how the schools were run would have passed us by, except for those directly involved – the parents and current staff. But for the last 15 months a lot of people have been heavily exercised debating the issues and fighting for what they believe is right. Much of what has happened subsequently demonstrates just how right they were.

I have to ask whether we need to stop looking as closely at the operation of the Coventry School Foundation, or should we put all of this down as a never-to-be-repeated experience? Clearly, until some of the proposals and plans that still seem wrong are stopped, we have to continue to point out the errors and the mistakes. The key to this

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its foundation in 1545, its move to Warwick Road in 1885 (including noteworthy elements of its Victorian architecture) and its near destruction by bombing overnight on 8 and 9 April 1941.

We finish in the Archive Room where visitors have the opportunity to look at various artefacts, such as the original Royal Charter and Philip Larkin's school reports. Our visitors this year were a mixture of former pupils, prospective pupils and members of the public with no previous knowledge of the School or its history.

**Helen Cooper**  
School Librarian & Archivist  
(Class of 1975)



currently seems to be the whole “One School” mantra. A proposal still exists to register both Henry's and Bablake with the DfE as one school – and this is the critical: in its simplest form this precludes the two Schools entering some sports competitions as a combined entity (or by choice in their traditional form) – which leads to a reduction in access, higher costs for training which takes place at a third party venue and hence more safeguarding risk. It seeks to merge the two schools in practice, eroding their uniqueness and individuality, while paying lip service to notionally keeping two schools.

At the end of the day I don't think many of us really worry too much about what is painted on the side of the minibuses – but there are certainly justifiable concerns over watering down of the brands of both Henry's and Bablake in favour of “BKHS” – another acronym redolent with all the history of old chip paper. And why does it all need to be done so urgently? Rumours suggest a four-figure sum was spent just on rebranding rugby post protectors and staff sports kit alone – which is a very far cry from how things used to be done.

I mentioned earlier that Swallows is not now going to be sold. In fact, we believe that proposals are being developed to re-open it for educational purposes at some point, and while we mourn the short-sightedness and disruption caused by its closure, we have to welcome its potential return. As an aside, it is hoped that we can work with all the former pupils of Cov Prep to develop some sort of alumni organization for them.

So we are still left with some worries and concerns, albeit substantially smaller than they were: no merger but the annoying feeling that things still aren't quite where they should be. It has happened once so could it happen again? Hopefully people will continue to watch what goes on with a keener interest and the hope that both Henry's and Bablake continue to thrive and prosper – uniting in their centuries-old tradition of rivalry, for the good of all.

**Paul Fernandez-Montes**  
OCA Chair  
Class of 1973



## 98<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021

60 or so former pupils and staff, and their partners, gathered for the 98<sup>th</sup> OCA Dinner in the school hall. Everyone appeared to enjoy themselves very much - although numbers were rather lower than in previous years, after a 2-year gap everyone was determined to make the most of the occasion and the conversation (and the wine!) flowed as well as ever.

After the cheese and biscuits were consumed, OCA Chair, Paul Fernandez-Montes, introduced 3 contrasting speakers – current Acting Head, Phil Dearden, gave a positive and enthusiastic review of the school and its pupils' recent achievements; Daniel Xavier, the school's current Head Boy, provided a young person's view of the pupil experience in 2021; finally Principal Guest George Fisher, Head from 2000 to 2010, gave a speech in two distinct halves, the first highly entertaining and amusing and the second a serious and passionate view from the perspective of his involvement in the campaign to keep the separate identities of King Henry VIII and Bablake Schools.



The evening's speakers, above, left to right, current Acting Head, Philip Dearden, OCA Chairman, Paul Fernandez-Montes, and Head Boy, Daniel Xavier; below left, Principal Guest, the school's former Head, George Fisher.

Below right, and on the following pages, Old Coventrians, former staff and partners enjoy food, drink, conversation and music. *Photos by Catherine Kaye, Alumni Relations Officer, and Keith Bushnell, OCA Secretary.*



Above, table 8, was a mixed age group with a core of 1980s and 90s pupils.



Above, the occupants of table 5, most of them pupils from the late 1940s and early 50s, reacquaint themselves with the words of the school song.



Above, at the piano, Steve Teers (class of '73) accompanies a rendition of the School Song, to close the evening.



Above, table 6 mainly included pupils from the late 1960s.



Above, OCA Treasurer Ian Cresswell (class of 1973) is one of the organisers of the dinner, with special responsibility for sourcing the wine, as will be obvious. Ian's year colleague Harmit Kuner is next to him.



Left, table 1 featured the evening's speakers and the school's current Head Girl, Hannah Baker.



Left, table 4 was occupied by pupils who came to the school in the mid-1950s.



Right, table 3 was populated mainly by pupils who came to the school in the early-1970s.



Left, table 2 was occupied by retired staff.

## Doug Wylie (1929-2021)

Former staff and pupils who remember Doug, a teacher of Chemistry at King Henry VIII from 1954 to 1972, will be saddened to learn of his death on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

He left KHVIII to teach at Sidney Stringer School in the summer of 1972.

In the 1972 edition of The Coventrian, a former colleague said of Doug "He not only remembered his chemistry but he had a very good style of teaching it, so by keeping my eye on what he did, I managed to get by. I remember on one occasion when he was teaching in the laboratory next door, particularly well, I just opened the door and told my class to listen. This is now called team teaching in very progressive schools....Rapidly he became an efficient and seasoned teacher, very loyal and always prepared to go the one mile more which marks a man dedicated to his calling".

Away from the chemistry lab, he trained and supervised many stage-lighting teams whilst, with his passion for philately, his stamp club brought bargains to boy-enthusiasts.

Outside school he ran the Queens Road Baptist Church Youth Club for many years and he was also a Deacon at the Church.

He was also a keen gardener with "seemingly endless supplies of plants, sprouts, cabbages, broccoli and THE speciality outdoor tomatoes".

He was clearly much liked and respected not only by his colleagues but also by his pupils, one of whom commented "We shall remember him best because (he made) a potentially tedious and seemingly endless syllabus both interesting and enjoyable for us... Mr Wylie ensured we enjoyed one of the happiest years' chemistry so far and probably covered more work at the same time".

Doug was married to Pat, who predeceased him. The unverified rumour was that he never learned to drive because Pat's occupation was as a delivery driver for one of the big factories, so she wouldn't let him behind the wheel!

His funeral notice described him as the "Beloved Husband of the late Pat and a much-loved Dad and Grandpa".

## Natalie Harding (née Paul) Class of 2001 (10<sup>th</sup> June 1990– 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021)

Natalie died in November at the age of only 31 after battling a brain tumour for 4 years.

After a private funeral, there is a Memorial Service funeral at St Giles Church, Bubbenhall on 16<sup>th</sup> December at 1.45pm (see: <https://www.dignityfunerals.co.uk/funeral-notices/19-11-2021-natalie-kate-harding/>)

We hope to publish a full appreciation of Natalie in a later edition of this newsletter.

## Alan Etherden (1956-2021)

Alan passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

Many Old Coventrians will remember Alan fondly as a man of great intellect and humility, and a pianist and musician of supreme ability. Alan taught the piano at King Henry VIII for many years and contributed hugely to the nurturing of many fine musicians.

We hope to publish a full appreciation of Alan in the next newsletter (Spring 2022).

## Robin Dean Class of 1955

Robin died on 26<sup>th</sup> August at the age of 76.

He was a regular attendee at the Annual Dinner with his wife Sheila, who says they both looked forward to and enjoyed those occasions.

## Mike Hobday Class of 1950 (1939-2021)

Mike passed away in September. "A Service in Loving Memory" was held in St Margaret's Church, Wolston, on 11<sup>th</sup> October.

Mike was the husband of Pat Hobday, whom many will remember as a teacher in the Junior School and who made a significant contribution to integrating girls into the Senior School.

We hope to publish a full appreciation of Mike in the next newsletter (Spring 2022).

## Alan 'Chris' Doherty

### Class of 1962

7<sup>th</sup> October 1949 – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Alan 'Chris' Doherty attended the Universities of Leeds and East Anglia and spent his career teaching in various location in Norfolk. Although a history specialist he spent the later part of his career teaching disruptive pupils excluded from normal school. He retired, reluctantly in 2008.

Chris's start at King Henry VIII was delayed by a year due to the first episode of an illness which challenged him throughout his life. Beginning with a growth on his adrenal gland, Chris suffered a number of tumours on vital organs. This was later diagnosed as Von Hippel – Landau disease, an extremely rare genetically transmitted condition.

Chris did not let numerous serious hospital episodes and increasing disability prevent him from enjoying life and had many accomplishments outside of his teaching career. He was a superb self-taught cook, a talented painter, and his love of music led to him being involved in the establishment of a local folk music club.

In later years, despite being wheelchair-bound, he took on challenges which would frighten most able-bodied people.

This included regular off-road travelling in mountainous areas in his electric buggy. He spent two days aboard a tall ship, being expected to help out with swabbing the decks and other tasks and sharing sleeping quarters with rats. The highlight of this episode was being hauled in his wheelchair by rope up to the crow's nest.

However, his most daring experience came when well into retirement and significantly disabled he made a parachute jump from a plane, which terrified his family, if not Chris himself.



He landed safely without injury, although one of his shoes fell off during the descent and was not recovered.

Chris was told when a young man that he might not live beyond his fifties. Due to sheer determination, lack of self-pity, terrific family support and an unstoppable sense of humour, he made it to within a few months of his 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday, with only the Covid pandemic preventing further exploits.

Chris led life to the full and against the odds, and was an inspiration to anyone lucky to have known him.

**IAN BUSHNELL (Class of '62)**

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## Alan Stevens – Class of 1948

(1937-2021)

Alan was born in Coundon on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1937 and died peacefully on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

He gained a Scholarship to King Henry VIII School in 1948 where he excelled at mathematics and was active in most sports, particularly rugby. He was in Kings House.

Alan always appreciated his time at KHVIII and

was so enamoured with the School Song, that even in later years each time he, wife Pam and the family passed its gates, he burst into song with great vigour!

His parents Walter and Hilda wanted him to train as an Accountant, but Alan was a very practical man, always intrigued by how gadgets worked and spent ages taking things apart just to put them back together again – so it was no surprise that after leaving KHVIII in 1954 he became an engineer.

Alan served his Apprenticeship with Armstrong

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Siddeley employed in the Rocket Division at Ansty and was very proud to win the Apprentice of the Year award.

Several years after leaving Armstrong Siddeley Alan joined Pirelli where he met his wife Pam and became a fantastic stepfather to Pam's two children, Marcus and Kirsty.

Working at Pirelli allowed Alan the opportunity to travel abroad, and he made many more lifelong friends, particularly in Italy.

Alan's love of sport continued well into later life. On leaving School he joined Old Coventrians RFC and played until early 1970s. He made many 1<sup>st</sup> XV appearances in the back row and in later seasons applied his knowledge and experience to bring on the youngsters in the lower teams.

He was a Life Vice President of OCRFC.

Alan was also Captain of Kenilworth Squash Club, and a loyal Aston Villa fan – when they won! He enjoyed visiting Villa Park with his son and grandchildren.

**PETER OWEN (class of '55)**

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## Chris Roberts

### Class of 1974

**(1963-2021)**

I put up a post on Facebook last April about my partner's young niece who is enjoying a successful acting career. "Will she still call me Uncle Adrian when she gets to Hollywood?" I asked. It wasn't long before Chris Roberts had commented; "Make sure she calls you 'my agent.'"

It was a classic piece of Chris Roberts dry wit which I had first enjoyed when we played in the football team together at King Henry VIII junior school. Chris was a talented sportsman who went on to play in one of the senior school's most successful rugby teams which won all of the age group Coventry trophies in consecutive years in the second half of the 1970s.

Chris was never a noisy rugby player who boasted of his great talent. His strength – in a dressing room, on the pitch and indeed in life -- was his composure and ability to analyse a situation and act up on it -- often with observational humour. His quips were delivered as fast as the breaks he made on a rugby field.

This made Chris a popular student among his peers at King Henry VIII. Although he moved away to London for his work, where he ran his own video production company, the friendships he made at King Henry VIII were a major part of his life.

Chris was rarely out of the company of Steve Inns and Steve Thrift in the playground at King Henry VIII and later at "The Rocket" pub when they were older. The three stayed extremely close for the next 50 years. The two Steves were part of every chapter of Chris's life and they summed up his

character superbly in a special tribute which was read out at his funeral in August.

"Chris had the ability to make a pint last an eternity, his friends often saying that it would evaporate quicker than he could drink it," they said. "But he would be too busy telling one of his legendary, lengthy, but witty stories, something Chris was well known for throughout his life. His quick wit was always at the forefront of any conversation."

Chris was always keen to meet former King Henry VIII friends and he would always find time to attend reunions of the school rugby team, usually organised by his good friend Nick Newbold. At the last one in April 2019 at a Coventry Rugby Club game, players, fans and members kept coming up to the Henry's table, shaking Nick's hand and chatting.

When the numbers got into double figures, Chris shouted out: "Is there anybody in the room who doesn't know Nick Newbold? No? I thought not." It raised a great laugh. Classic Chris Roberts.

It is a tribute to his friendship that many former pupils were present at his packed funeral in London.

The two Steves helped to keep his schoolfriends informed about the last few months of Chris's life and to help his wife Joan with the many tributes which were made at his funeral.

The most poignant came from Joan and Chris's daughters Marnie and Ruby.

"He always seemed to have an answer for most questions we had to ask, and would respond to any problem with calmness and rationality, " they said. "No matter the situation he'd have a solution, which he would deliver along with hints of mockery."

**ADRIAN WARNER (Class of '74)**

# Peter John Bruton

Class of 1952

(21<sup>st</sup> February 1939–6<sup>th</sup>

September 2021)

## A personal tribute

I knew Peter as a firm friend, a faithful fellow-worshipper at St Andrew's Church, Eastern Green, and loyal and hard-working fellow-member of the Old Coventrians' Association Committee, on which he served with an energy that belied his years, determined to give back to the school where he had been educated (Class of 1952) and which he loved. How he would have enjoyed the return of the OCA's Annual Dinner, held in School again recently, and the annual bowls tournament he had faithfully organised for many years.

His first work placement was with Jaguar and he remained in the motor industry until he retired as Dealer Principal from Trinity Motors in March 2001. The only interruption being his call up to the RAF.

Peter and Sheila were married in 1971 and were blessed with a son and a daughter. He was extremely competitive and had many interests and hobbies, being cricket captain in his earlier days and latterly bowls captain. He was acting chairman of the bridge club, lead volunteer for Canal & River Trust and a member of the model railway club. He enjoyed owning a narrowboat and his many travels abroad.

News of his sudden heart attack was a great shock to many.

The service to celebrate his life, held at St Andrew's Church, Eastern Green, was attended by as many people as Covid restrictions allowed. It was carefully arranged so that all the very wide areas of Peter's interests and involvement were represented, from those who had bought second hand cars from him to those who had shared his selfless, altruistic, active and understated support of projects that protected the environment and rivers,. It was acknowledged that in normal circumstances very many more would have attended to pay their respects and show their affection for him and their gratitude. Peter had wanted the service to be held in the church where he had served so long and faithfully and where he was an ever-present, warm, much loved and respected figure and loyal servant, whether as a sidesperson or regular reader.

At the celebration afterwards, the multitude of photographs on display and the people who spoke about how Peter had touched their lives was far beyond what I knew of his life, and bore testimony to the breadth of his interests and service, his quiet



humility and humanity. All spoke of his faith, his kindness, his service, his cutting wit and humour and his devotion to his family.

Even as I write this very personal tribute, I am aware of how inadequate it is and cannot do full justice to a man who gave so much and will be sorely missed by so many. Our thoughts, condolences and prayers are with his widow Sheila, daughter Julia and son James.

Thank you, Peter. Rest in peace.

**JEREMY THOMAS**

## Vince Iwanek (1946–2021)

*This tribute is based on the address given by former King Henry VIII Headmaster, George Fisher, at Vince's funeral at St Peter ad Vincula Church, Hampton Lucy, on 25<sup>th</sup> October.*

Vince joined the Coventry School Foundation in 1996 and proved himself to be a formidable figure, acting as both the Foundation's Bursar to the whole group of schools, and as Clerk to the Governing Body, the latter being no small task with over 20 meetings per year for which to prepare agendas / circulate supporting documents, etc.

He rapidly developed a clear overview of what was required, underpinned by detailed financial planning and modelling, with spreadsheets which stretched far into the future!

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Vince's clear thinking, sense of fairness and comprehensive oversight were the cornerstone of the Foundation's success, enabling investment to be made on all of the sites and giving confidence to governors, staff and parents that new building projects were 'doable' so long as the schools (and their respective heads) played their part. Soon after his arrival at the Foundation a scandal blew up at KHVIII, and here Vince was instrumental in restoring confidence on the part of the staff and parents, and in putting a stop to unhelpful gossip and speculation which was spreading around the sixth form. He remained an incredibly good person to turn to in times of trouble or distress: calm, authoritative and yet (perhaps to the surprise of some) very sensitive. Vince never left behind his training and the characteristics of somebody with such a distinguished career in the military: he was always punctual for meetings (well, 5 minutes early, in fact!), invariably smartly turned out, cared deeply about his staff within the Foundation office, and never over-stepped his 'rank'.

As a former military colleague, Esmond White, recalled at Vince's funeral: "After the fall of Poland in 1939, Vince's father made an heroic escape across Europe, joined the Royal Engineers and won an MC at Monte Casino, so it was no surprise that Vince followed his father's footsteps into the Royal Engineers".

Esmond recounted how he and Vince first met as cadets at Sandhurst before they were both commissioned into the Royal Engineers. They were to meet again when their career paths crossed with the British Army of the Rhine in North Germany, on Salisbury Plain, in Northern Ireland and elsewhere.

Esmond added: "Vince's dogged courage, organisational ability and pure professionalism then led to him being appointed to a series of important training, staff and logistic roles before being made Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers Resources depot near here at Long Marston."

In his new career in Coventry, Vince was scrupulously careful not to intervene in the running of the schools, leaving clear lines of delegation to the heads and their management teams. At time he also brought with him some colourful language and some nice turns of military phrase.

It appeared that Vince found the role of Bursar an easier one than that of the Clerk to the Governors. In the former he was in charge of the planning and the thinking and was a hugely creative force for good. In the latter, whilst his job was to provide briefing documents for governors, he could not always be sure to steer their thinking....and so, rather like Sir Humphrey, there were times of



visible frustration when 'the Minister' did not stick to his script! What all governors will have done is to have counted themselves lucky to have had such a dedicated, intelligent, loyal and determined figure at the financial helm.

Vince had an interesting relationship with teaching staff. He admired the profession enormously, recognising that perhaps he would not have had the patience to be a success within the classroom. [He frequently referred to his own school, unfairly no doubt, as a 'hooligan factory!'] Yet in private he could not always hide his frustration that apparently simple 'instructions' or requirements from HQ were being ignored. Perhaps this was a case where the more hierarchical and 'command-based' approach within the military clashed with the 'fluffier' and slightly anarchic approach of schools?

Greatly to his credit was the fact that Vince never sought to 'exploit' his position within the Coventry School Foundation to benefit his own family; he

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was a model parent, appreciative and understanding of what the schools were trying to do and with an unfailing modesty. For a Head, Vince was a wonderful ally; he cared deeply about all of the schools, always taking the trouble to go to Open Evenings and 'beat the bounds'.

Vince continued his work as Bursar until 2012 when the consequences of Parkinson's were becoming impossible to ignore. He continued his close interest in the Foundation until the day he died, still exchanging emails (confidential of course!) literally until the end.

George's appreciation concluded "And so, what an extraordinary impact Vince made in his 'second career,' where through hard work and intelligent planning, he effectively anchored the futures of around 2,500 pupils every year. Thank you, Vince, for all that you did."

Vince is survived by his wife Hilary and their children Stephen, Michael, David and Evelyn, all of whom were pupils at King Henry VIII during their father's time as Bursar.

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## **Philip Earp MA, MSci (Cantab), DPhil (Oxon), MIMMM \***

Congratulations to Old Coventrian Philip Earp (Class of 2004) on his recent DPhil graduation from Oxford University. Very proud parents Jane (ex-KHVIII staff) and Pete Earp contacted the school with the good news.

Phil submitted his thesis entitled 'Deformation and Strain Concentration in Coarse-Grained Alpha-Uranium' in September 2019. However, as we are all aware Covid has delayed or prevented many events from taking place and the Graduation ceremony finally took place on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford.

On leaving King Henry's in 2011, Phil went to Cambridge University to study Natural Sciences, where he spent 4 years earning a Master's in Material Science. He then went on to Oxford University to study towards his DPhil. After 4 years of extremely hard work, he achieved his aim.

Jane says "There is no doubt his years at King Henry's laid the strong foundations for him to go on and achieve academic success. Phil is now working as a Materials Scientist for the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority at Culham Science Centre and lives in Abingdon".

\*Member of the Institute of Materials Minerals and Mining



The next edition of the OCA Newsletter will be the spring 2022 edition. This will be circulated before the end of the school term on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022, but the exact date is yet to be confirmed.

Please ensure any items for inclusion are sent to us (email: [alumni@bkhs.org.uk](mailto:alumni@bkhs.org.uk)) in good time and at the latest by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March.

## Annual Bowls Tournament

The annual OCA Bowls tournament took place on 27<sup>th</sup> August at Tile Hill Lane, with 10 entrants of varying ability.

Congratulations to Martyn Cooper who beat Colin Hart in the Final, having pipped OCA Chair, and previous champion bowler, Paul Fernandez-Montes in a closely contested semi-final.

Sadly this was the last annual tournament organised by our dear friend Peter Bruton who had organised the event every year but was in the event unable to attend this time due to illness and passed away just over a week later.

Not least to honour Peter's memory we hope to make next year's event bigger and better.

### Round 1

Keith Bushnell	7	11	Ian Cresswell
Dave Butler	4	11	Peter Jones
Paul Montes	11	6	Helen Cooper
Colin Hart	11	4	Jan Butler
Martyn Cooper	11	9	Wilf Pattinson

### Round 2

Keith Bushnell	0	11	Wilf Pattinson
Dave Butler	11	2	Jan Butler
Paul Montes	11	8	Ian Cresswell
Colin Hart	11	1	Helen Cooper
Martyn Cooper	11	9	Peter Jones

### Semi-finals

Colin Hart	11	8	Wilf Pattinson
Paul Montes	10	11	Martyn Cooper

### FINAL

Martyn Cooper	11	9	Colin Hart
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The four semi-finalists, Wilf, Paul, Colin and Martyn

## Crackley Run 2021

Our usual Christmas catch up and run around the woods of Crackley will unfortunately not take place this year I'm afraid. A combination of HS2 blighting the landscape and Covid worries, mixed in with a little organisers' fatigue make this a step too much. Fear not though, we will plan a run at the end of spring term, possibly Good Friday or Easter Monday as well as ensuring the 2022 event takes place - tentative date of Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December. I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and hope to catch up with many of you at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary relay on 2<sup>nd</sup> February!

**Peter Mahiques**

## Hockey Tournament Delayed

The Dean Close Hockey Tournament should have taken place on 24<sup>th</sup> October in Cheltenham.

Unfortunately it had to be called off a couple of days before. 3 of the 4 umpires had covid and 3 travelling teams also pulled out.

It is now scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2022.

Any new players who wish to take part should email the Alumni Office, this will then be forwarded to Pat Head. We hope the original players will still be able to take part.

# Larkin, Jazz, and the Motor City (part 2)

Adrian Smith

Emeritus Professor of Modern History, University of Southampton

**Annual distinguished lecture of the Larkin Society, 5 June 2021**

*Continued from June 2021 issue....*

## Larkin's Jazz-loving Legacy at King Henry VIII

In July 1973 Larkin visited Coventry to receive an honorary degree from Warwick University. The ceremony over, he found time to watch his old school's First XI in action, relishing the quality of the cricket and the timelessness of the occasion (to digress again, was this the only time King Henry VIII's best-known old boy enjoyed a close encounter with King Henry VIII's best-known teacher, watching Jeff Vent umpire?). By the end of the decade everything would have changed, with King Henry VIII becoming a co-educational fully independent grammar school, the fees for which saw it become ever more detached from a city it was originally endowed to serve. But the direct grant boys grammar school Larkin wandered into that sunny Saturday afternoon retained a degree of continuity with the creaking academic institution he waved goodbye to in the summer of 1940. Only a few years had passed since the last of the teachers who taught Larkin had retired, while classrooms and corridors in the school's original buildings would have looked familiar. In some subjects the style of teaching would have scarcely changed, notably History; although as an Oxford man Larkin would have bridled at the heavy influence of F.R. Leavis upon the largely Cambridge-trained English staff. A big difference from before the war was the high status of rugby within the school, with former members of the First XV starring for Coventry, England, and the British Lions.

The biggest shift was among the pupils themselves, overwhelmingly middle-class and moulded by the profound social and cultural changes all adolescents had experienced across the preceding ten years. An essay in the late 1990s by the cultural historian and fellow Old Coventrian Peter Bailey described life as a sixth former in the mid-fifties not that different from Larkin's schooldays; but radically different from my own experience at the end of the 'sixties.



*Professor Adrian Smith*

(Incidentally, Bailey recalled no mention by staff of Larkin, whereas I can clearly recall classroom discussion of poems in *The Whitsun Weddings* – Philip Larkin, he was one of us!).

One cultural strand running from the eve of war through the years of Coventry's civic and diocesan reconstruction to its apogee of post war affluence was jazz. Larkin, Jim Sutton, and their fellow New Orleans and Beale Street aficionados approached their hallowed music with awe, affection, and a scholarly attention to the minutiae of personnel, recording, composition, etc. They were obsessed with authenticity, swiftly dumping pale transatlantic imitations. Thus, they displayed a familiar late adolescent trait of exclusivity, with a strong sense of cultural superiority – think of later generations eschewing Cliff for Elvis, or Donovan for Dylan. Jazz was an escape from suburbia and domesticity, if only in one's head, and here there's a direct line from Larkin to Peter Bailey, with two significant exceptions. Unlike the tyro poet, Bailey had a handful of fledgling jazz clubs to spend his pocket money getting into. The music was invariably mediocre and the atmosphere flat, but at least it was a lifestyle option. The musicians were usually playing trad jazz, and here lay a problem – unlike Larkin and his fellow connoisseurs of Dixieland, Bailey and his schoolmates saw jazz post

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-be bop as synonymous with sex. They wanted the Birth of the Cool, not college lecturers with goatee beards and bowler hats mangling a trombone. To quote the man himself, 'For the young in particular, American film and music projected a countervailing pulse of freedom, adventure and pleasurable behaviour.'

Coventry's clubs slowly evolved into credible showcases of contemporary British jazz, even if it was hard to imagine Ronnie Scott and Pete King rolling into town. The most enduring institution could be found in the newly rebuilt Broadgate, at the Leofric Hotel – arguably the city's most visible secular symbol of modernity and reconstruction.

The club lasted on and off for over fifty years, forming the core of millennial Coventry's short-lived Jazz Festival. None of this would have come as a surprise to Larkin, who was always well informed as to what was happening on the jazz scene both sides of the Atlantic. Not only that but in 1959 he wrote 'Not The Place's Fault', an article about his childhood, for Coventry's Umbrella magazine. In the piece he described acquiring the shellac sound of Bix or Bechet for the substantial sum of three shillings, at Hanson's music shop in Hertford Street. Reborn post war as Jill Hanson's, in a freshly built Market Way, here was Coventry's premier record shop for late 'fifties devotees of Davis – copies of Milestones and Kind Of Blue flew off the shelves and on to the turntables of a young educated middle-class, the vanguard of future bourgeoisification, Midlands style. The Umbrella magazine was the literary face of the Umbrella Club, founded by Terry Watson, the English master who a decade later introduced my class to The Whitsun Weddings. The Umbrella Club was later home to Coventry's folk club, but in its original format it projected a cooler image – if the city had any Sartre-reading, hard bop-listening beatniks then this was the place for them. Larkin didn't want to waste any time discussing Being and Nothingness with beatniks, but he was by no means averse to their musical preferences.

Peter Bailey and his chums didn't have a formal jazz club, but they unknowingly maintained the Larkin tradition at King Henry VIII, as did the more sophisticated sixth formers of the following decade. These were the precocious purchasers of low-tax Ornette Coleman albums on school camp in Guernsey; or the adolescent cool cats who bemoaned the head of music's guileless refusal to sample Baker or Brubeck. Given the school's diocesan contacts, teachers and pupils must surely

have attended Duke Ellington's First Sacred Concert when it was premiered in the new cathedral. Here one would have thought was an ideal excuse for Larkin to visit his native city, but sadly – as he told Robert Conquest on news of the Duke's death – 'the suites and what-nots of the past twenty years struck me as crap.' The 'crap' played in Coventry was for Ellington, 'the most important thing I've ever done or am likely to do.' By the end of the 'sixties and the start of the new decade, the advent of fusion music meant even the most tunnel-visioned devotee of rock music at King Henry VIII found himself listening to contemporary jazz. Larkin, surprisingly open-minded about fusion music, unless it was Miles Davis playing the likes of Bitches Brew, would have winced at the centrality of the Lanchester Polytechnic in the lives of music-loving sixth formers. Bemused, the latter listened to Roland Kirk blowing multiple sax and Sun Ra firing his piano into the cosmos – remarkably, with Larkin's approval, going by a 1971 review of Sun Ra. They heard Larry Coryell lead Jack Bruce back to his roots as a jazz bassist, and on the same night witnessed a rare concert by the all-star New Jazz Orchestra. Larkin felt the same way about the NJO's celebrated *Le Déjeuner sur L'Herbe* as he did Ellington's orchestral compositions: 'I can't pretend it is jazz as I understand the word.' It wasn't that he was unaware of the Young Turks performing – in reviewing the album he tips his hat to drummer Jon Hiseman. It seems as if Larkin was averse to 'sixties Britain's adventurous and ambitious composer/arrangers like the NJO's Neil Ardley, or the Michaels Garrick and Gibbs, or even on occasion Mike Westbrook – although his early work attracted plaudits. Keith Tippett never got a mention in the 'seventies reviews, and more surprisingly, in 1965 Stan Tracey's legendary *Under Milk Wood* was ignored (one can only assume he never received a review copy, or was it that Larkin's uncomplimentary views on Dylan Thomas were common knowledge?).

Keith Tippett's young guns brass section augmented Soft Machine on a barn-storming tour of Britain in the winter of 1969-70, a prelude to the band playing the stand-out tracks on their third album at a pioneering Prom the following summer. Fired up by hearing Soft Machine's forays into the avant-garde live on John Peel, King Henry VIII's finest young minds gathered at the Lanchester to hear Robert Wyatt's improvised vocal intro to 'Moon In June', followed by a wall of sound that would surely have sent Larkin to the farthest reaches of the polytechnic's cathedral-facing concert hall [we'll

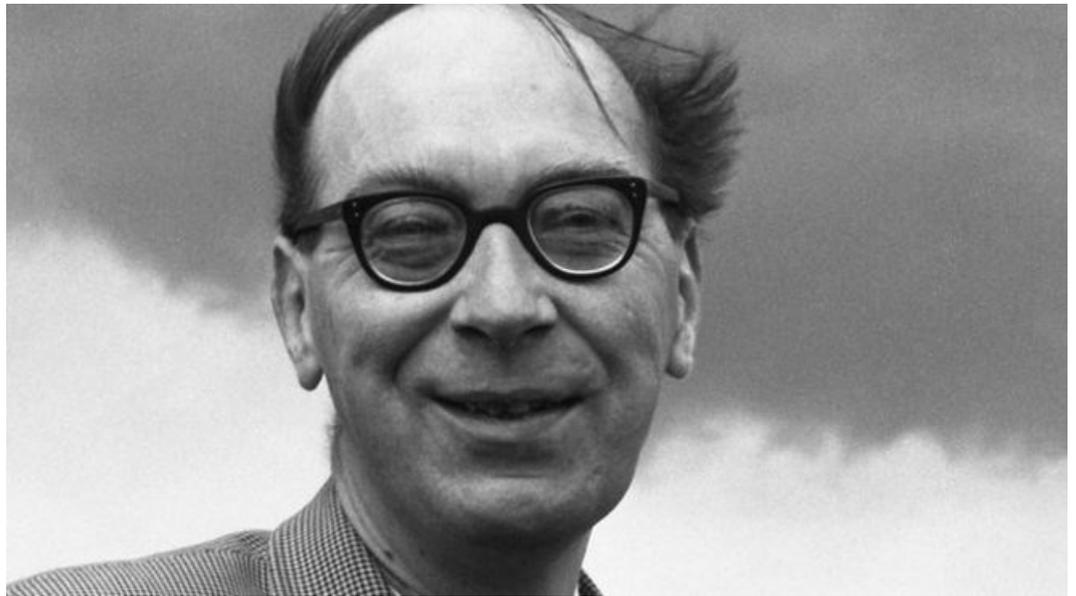
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hear a snatch of Wyatt's rhyming prowess on Peel's 'Top Gear' at the end of the lecture]. Larkin would surely have appreciated the technical prowess of all present – we often forget that a paraplegic Wyatt was a powerful but at the same time deceptively subtle drummer. I like to think Larkin would have appreciated the studied rawness and carefully controlled improvisation – a stark contrast to all those ostensibly over-elaborate multi-instrumental compositions he saw as an anathema to the true spirit of jazz.

Larkin would have shuddered had he known Wyatt's proficiency as a percussionist was learnt while summering with Robert Graves in Majorca. He would, however, have approved of Wyatt's late century bolt hole, the estuary home he owned at Humberston Fitties, favoured place of reflection for Vaughan Williams, and more recently, the versifying head of the Brynmor Jones Library. Unlike Wyatt, Larkin was suspicious to the point of hostile towards a modernist European aesthetic – there are precious few contemporary continental albums reviewed throughout his tenure at the Telegraph (as opposed to the giants of an earlier era, from Bechet to Reinhardt) What I suspect Larkin would have approved of, was the strenuous attempts by the likes of Robert Wyatt and the very different Richard Thompson to write and perform music that owed very little to dominant American genres. In Thompson's words, 'I'd never been to Chicago, so why should I play as if I was born there?'. Cultural appropriation was something on which both Wyatt and Larkin hold and held strong views – a meeting-point for Gramsci and Thatcher, one might say. Robert Wyatt and Eric Hobsbawm were comrades, but ironically, it's Larkin who would have made more of an effort to comprehend his music.

John Peel considered Robert Wyatt 'the greatest living Englishman', and my thanks to Philip Pullen for the revelation that in August 1979 Peel bumped into Larkin while holidaying in the Lake District. Nearly ten years earlier he had bumped into me in the gents toilets of the Lanchester Polytechnic – I would like to think the conversation with Larkin was more elevated than my grunting exchange with



Philip Larkin

someone who could credibly claim to have significantly shaped popular music in Britain across the second half of the twentieth century.

Playing with the New Jazz Orchestra at the Lanchester, and then in her own right three days later, was saxophonist Barbara Thompson, partner of Jon Hiseman. Robert Wyatt's foremost collaborator and interpreter is the trombonist Annie Whitehead. Larkin's reviews suggest he would have enjoyed the solo work of both Thompson and Whitehead; but in the early 'seventies they were years from entering the recording studio in their own right. For Larkin women in jazz were overwhelmingly singers. He eulogised Ma Rainey, and one wonders how he would have rated Viola Davis's performance in Ma Rainey's Black Bottom. Women out front on stage leading their own bands was, with only a few exceptions like Barbara Thompson, unknown. I would like to think Larkin would have defied the many accusations of misogyny had he lived longer and listened with approval as the likes of Thompson and Whitehead placed a feminist perspective on mainstream male-dominated jazz. Of course he was still in his prime when one of the world's great songwriters immersed herself in contemporary jazz, but either he didn't know of Joni Mitchell's tribute to Charles Mingus and her work with Tom Scott's LA Express and bassist Jaco Pastorius, or he didn't want to know. So, Philip Larkin and women musicians – the unknown story.

One thing we do know is that in King Henry VIII's twilight years as a boys-only direct grant grammar school the light of Larkinesque jazz appreciation was still aflame. How do we know that? It's because Jerry Dammers, founder of the Specials, is an Old

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Coventrian – although he doesn't broadcast the fact, and for whatever reason neither does his old school. While one can only assume a conversation between Mrs Thatcher's favourite poet and the composer of 'Ghost Town' and 'Free Nelson Mandela' might have been lively, Larkin and Dammers would surely have found much to agree on when it came to modern jazz – after all Dammers' Spatial AKA Orchestra was primarily a tribute band to Sun Ra, who as we have seen Larkin had a soft spot for, even when the great eccentric quit the piano stool to roam the universe. It's precisely because Jerry Dammers considers himself first and foremost a jazzman (or should that be jazz person) that he rarely talks about Two Tone, and he doesn't play with the reconstituted Specials.



Jerry Dammers

Jerry Dammers left King Henry VIII in 1972, forty years after Philip Larkin progressed from the junior to the senior school. Larkin loved his alma mater, whereas I suspect Dammers hated it. Yet they bookend a four-decade era of the hippest, coolest cats up on Warwick Road enjoying their jazz. Did the co-educational independent school created in the mid-seventies still foster, year on year, a few hardy souls keen to go against the grain: 'Never mind Simply Red, take a listen to Courtney Pine!'/ 'Please, sir, can we listen to the Jazz Jamaica All Stars?'/ 'To hell with Ed Sheeran, check out Kamasi Washington and Thundercat!'. Actually, because Kendrick Lamar's To Pimp A Butterfly was such a great critical and commercial success, Kamasi Washington and Thundercat may well have a presence among the more streetwise of today's highly privileged sixth formers. Were he still alive and well, Larkin might not think much of the music (somehow I can't see him as a fan of rap and hip hop), but he would surely love the idea of sixteen

and seventeen years old lapping up American street music in the same way that he and his mates did on the eve of war.

## Conclusion

The late adolescent music enthusiast is a purist – after eighteen rock'n'roll, folk, jazz, blues, will never again be as important and as life-enhancing! Larkin retained an element of that purism. Reading him bemoaning complex, carefully arranged compositions, even by the greats like Duke Ellington, has echoes of punk's early fans railing against the dry-ice excesses of prog rock. Rock critics like Greil Marcus or Lester Bangs, or later Paul Morley (surely someone with interesting opinions on Larkin and popular music) would plead for a back to basics in a manner reminiscent of Larkin – so too, of course, would John Peel in wholeheartedly embracing punk. Sometimes that search for the pure spirit of jazz sends him in the wrong direction, most notably over late Coltrane. Sometimes, he appreciates the work, but just can't reconcile it to his original conception of what constituted jazz – a good example is Miles Davis's In A Silent Way. On other occasions, however, he gets it right – Davis's repositioning himself on stage at the Fillmore West or the Isle of Wight as an ageing Hendrix of the trumpet did little to enhance his formidable reputation. Arguably in the simpler, more melodic music made at the end of his life, Miles Davis vindicated Larkin's strictures at the time of Bitches Brew – in his October 1970 review of the latter, Larkin says he would far rather listen to the latest Clifton Chenier compilation, and he's not alone in that. But the very fact that he was listening to the 'King of the Bayou', relishing Cajun and the more hard-edge zydeco music, speaks volumes. Conversely, his insensitive and ill-informed remarks about soul music when hailing newcomer Aretha Franklin show that, for all his unanticipated inclusivity, Larkin could be spectacularly ill-informed when discussing contemporary African American popular culture. Clive James wrote in 2014, 'The man who said such beautiful things in tribute to black musicians couldn't really have been race-prejudiced even if he claimed to be.' Reverse unconscious bias – well that's one way of reading Larkin on soul music.

Do all great modern writers need a hinterland? Ted Hughes had his farming and fly fishing. Samuel Beckett had cricket and then cycling. The list goes on, with Pinter and Stoppard fellow cricketers – plays like No Man's Land sees a blurring of Pinter's twin passions, while Stoppard is the definitive

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polymath. Philip Larkin had jazz, in the broadest meaning of the term. His position with the Daily Telegraph gave him access to an extraordinary range of albums, many of which went straight to the cellar, as with *Blonde On Blonde*. Yet many challenging albums did not, and it's a testimony to him that he didn't play safe. He could be spectacularly wrong, but even when he is the comments are rarely dismissive. Thus his mini-essay on John Coltrane in July 1965 starts with the turn of phrase likely to outrage Richard Williams, but having grabbed the reader's attention he then produces a surprisingly balanced assessment of Coltrane's most recent releases – surprisingly, he doesn't wholly dislike *A Love Supreme*. There's a self-confidence in his reviews, but it rarely tips over into arrogance – his judgement is rooted in the fact that he demonstrably knows a lot about jazz music, of every sort and of every decade.

Contrary to popular assumption, Larkin was by no means deaf to contemporary music, even if he shuddered at the improvised and the avant-garde. Nowhere was this more apparent than in his

appreciation of the blues, where he would have been wholly relaxed sipping bourbon in Buddy Guy's South Side bar listening to Little Walter – he loved Little Walter!

In 1969 John Mayall came to Coventry on the back of his big band album *Bare Wires* – apart from guitarist Mick Taylor, one year away from sudden elevation to a Rolling Stone, Larkin would have recognised every one on stage had he wandered into the student union of Lanchester Polytechnic at the end of a rare return to the old home town. I like to imagine him wandering backstage with his fizzy pint of Watney's Red Barrel, ignoring the scornful looks of the hirsute social secretary and engaging Jon Hiseman and Tony Reeves in a lengthy discussion as to Miles's finest rhythm section.

These two stalwarts of the British jazz scene would have been indifferent to Larkin's collar and tie, his sports jacket and flannels, appreciating the insights of a man who really knew his stuff. Marinated in music they would have recognised one of a kind – and, as jazz in the Motor City has shown us, so should we.

## Celebrating 50 Years of the Relay in February



King Henry VIII Relay Race 2022 is the 50th Anniversary of our race.

We would like to invite all adults who have either run the race when they were at school, or have volunteered to help with the race by coaching/bringing a team, or helping with the event in the past 50 years.

It will be one loop of the course, starting at 1:45pm on Wednesday 2nd February at the War Memorial Park, Coventry. You may wish to talk to your alumni group, but details of how to enter are at [www.kinghenrys.co.uk/co-curricular/king-henry-viii-relay-race](http://www.kinghenrys.co.uk/co-curricular/king-henry-viii-relay-race) It will be an individual race, but with an opportunity to have team-times too.



Please remember to tell us about changes in e-mail address

## Old Coventrians' Marathon Ladder

Rank	Name	Time	Marathon	Year
1	B.B. Heatley	2.13.55	Windsor Chiswick	1964
2	K. Binks	2.27.44	Manchester	1973
3	D. Smith	2.28.50	London	1982
4	S.N. Morris	2.29.12	New York	1981
5	J.G.Wheeler	2.32.30	Birmingham	1982
6	D.N. Glassborow	2.39.40	London	1981
7	M.L.Cole	2.43.39	Coventry	1981
8	Graham Wigley	2.43.56	London	1986
9	G.Herbert	2.44.28	London	1983
10	S. Horton	2.46.14	Birmingham	1983
11	E.W.Norrish	2.48.49	Nottingham	1981
12	V.Pauzers	2.53.41	New York	1981
13	P.Haines	2.56.18	Barnsley	1981
14	Paul Gaskell	2.56.49	Dublin	2012
15	Paul Chapman	2.59.41	Houston	2020
16	Richard Charley	3.02.48	Shakespeare	2007
17	Kathryn Stuart	3.06.52	Loch Ness	2017
18	Richard Powell	3.07.24	London	2015
19	M.R.Shelton	3.07.54	Coventry	1982
20	Ian Hurry	3.09.23	Sheffield	1990
21	Malcom Saville	3.09.27	London	1994
22	Neville Chapman	3.09.28	Loch Ness	2014
23	Peter Mahiques	3.09.56	London	1994
24	Peter Jones	3.11.15	London	1983
25	D.R.Gadsby	3.13.28	Coventry	1982
26	Nigel Harrison	3.14.10	Coventry	1981
27	R.A. Bartlett	3.18.56	Coventry	1982
28	Adrian Smith	3.19.20	Mid Wales	1989
29	Paul Barnes	3.21.12	Manchester	2017
30	R.Brandon	3.23.00	New York	1981
31	Zoe Milton	3.23.27	Edinburgh	2015
32	A.R.Cowman	3.24.46	Coventry	1981
33	J.P. Griffiths	3.25.00	London	1983
34	Allan Bolton	3.25.24	Solihull	1982
35	Wilf Pattison	3.25.38	Coventry	1981
36	I.M.Thomas	3.27.18	Coventry	1982
37	R.G.Adams	3.28.37	Coventry	1982
38	Emma Garnett	3.31.00	Chester	2019
39	Steve Randle	3.36.36	London	2019
40	L.Baldon	3.36.48	Coventry	1981
41	D. Blundell	3.42.03	Coventry	1982
42	R.W.Haw	3.42.20	Coventry	1982
43	A.J. Kockelbergh	3.43.28	Coventry	1982
44	A.R. Hall	3.45.07	Coventry	1982
45	M.C. Breakwell	3.46.22	London	1983
46	Richard Beamish	3.48.51	Birmingham	1982
47	N.J.Hobday	3.49.18	Coventry	1982
48	James Steatham	3.50.30	Shakespeare	2009
49	Will Spencer	3.50.42	London	2008
50	Daniel Hawcutt	3.52.32	New York	2008
51	M.Garside	3.52.36	Coventry	1982
52	Tim Hall	3.53.57	London	2005
53	David Bridges	3.56.53	Chester	2011
54	Russell Baum	3.59.36	Prague	2006
55	B.J.Bennet	3.59.50	Coventry	1981
56	K. Greenhall	4.04.00	Cardiff	1982
57	Jonathan Spurgeon	4.05.33	Barbados	2002
58	Emily LeCornu	4.10.00	Windermere	2010
59	P.R.Kennedy	4.10.51	Coventry	1982
60	Nicki Whetstone	4.11.28	London	2015
61	Sam Lazarus-Keene	5.34.02	Clifftop Challenge	2018

*The Marathon Ladder has not changed a lot since the last newsletter.*

*We hope there will be some more new entries during 2022.*

## Alumni Relations Office Messages

### 2021 Leavers

A level certificates have now arrived and are ready to collect from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021, from the Senior School reception office. Please note that the school will be closed from Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December through to Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022 inclusive.

### Leavers' Reunion (Class of 2014)

The reunion party for last year's Leavers, which normally takes place before the Christmas holiday to coincide with the School Carol Concert, cannot be hosted this year because most universities end their term on 17<sup>th</sup> December, and the latest Covid guidelines discourage indoor events. We hope to plan a reunion during 2022.

Email [alumni@bkhs.org.uk](mailto:alumni@bkhs.org.uk) to let us know when would be a good time to run this event to make sure as many of you as possible can come along to catch up with friends and teachers over drinks and nibbles. Thanks.

### Reconnecting with friends from Class of 1965

James Burland would like to get in touch with all his friends from Class of 1965. To contact him and reconnect, please email [alumni@bkhs.org.uk](mailto:alumni@bkhs.org.uk) in the first instance.

This edition of the OCA Newsletter was put together by Keith Bushnell and Paul Fernandez-Montes, with the help of other OCA committee members, and with technical assistance from Tim Lees and Dan Kearns.



**Old Coventrians - A Community for Life - Not to be Broken by Covid or by Short Term Decision Making!**



## OCA Committee 2021-22

- Paul Fernandez-Montes (Chair, Class of 1973)
- Rob Phillips (Vice-Chair, Class of 1993)
- Keith Bushnell (Secretary, Class of 1972)
- Ian Cresswell (Treasurer, Class of 1973)
- Helen Cooper (Class of 1975)
- Pat Head (Retired staff)
- Peter Owen (Class of 1955)
- David Summers (Class of 1977)
- Jeremy Thomas (Retired staff)

### Ex Officio Members:

- Philip Dearden (Acting Headmaster, OCA Honorary President)
- Catherine Kaye (Alumni Relations Officer)

### Co-opted:

- Chris Spriggs (Retired staff)
- Pip Milton (Retired staff)
- Jan Butler (Retired staff)