Although this edition covers the period 2018 – 2019 it would be inappropriate not to remark upon the untimely passing in February 2020 of Dr David Parry, former Head of English, Deputy Head and finally our Head Teacher.

David had been ill and this had contributed to his early retirement but his death was sudden and unexpected. In the next newsletter we will pay full tribute to David and his contribution to the life of The Coopers’ Company and Coborn School and also to Mike Fenney who also died suddenly in January and who had for many years taught biology and science and Mrs Joyce Shephard who was our school welfare officer and then student counsellor. It has been a sad beginning to the new decade.

Dr David Parry

However, we must congratulate the staff and students at the Coopers’ Company and Coborn School for the splendid results achieved at both GCSE and Advanced level in 2019. The GCSE examinations have been reformed and as course work has been phased out are now intended to be more demanding. Under the guidance of Ms Sue Hay who succeeded Dr Parry as Head teacher a huge effort has been made by all those involved to ensure this high degree of success. Ms Hay was appointed Deputy Head teacher in 2012 and acted as Head during Dr Parry’s absence. We wish Mrs Hay well for the future and congratulate her on a smooth transition into her new role.

We send our congratulations to Ian Frood, alumnus, Chair of the Educational Foundation and former Master of the Company who was awarded an OBE in recognition of his service to the British cattle industry. For thirty years Dr. Frood has been the East Anglian Representative of the National Farmers Union National Livestock Board. In addition Dr. Frood is also associated with the Parry Trust that funds PhD research into agriculture and he is the Chairman of the Orsett Show.

Ms Beatrice Rigon - Redpath sends from her home in the south of France her best wishes to her former students. As Ms Rigon, Beatrice taught French. She is hoping to relocate to the UK.
Following the retirement of Mrs Nicole Chapman, whom many of you will remember as Mrs Deery, Mr. Stephen Lawlor has been appointed the Head of Chelmsford County High School for Girls. We wish Nicole a very happy retirement and Stephen every success in his new role.

In 2019 Mr Kevin Chapman was made a Freeman of the City of London at a ceremony at the Guildhall. Kevin is a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Coopers and following the above will be eligible to become a Liveryman of the Company. Kevin as any of you who attended our school between the 1970s and the 2010s know was a pivotal member of the teaching and leadership teams. Kevin’s roles included those of Assistant Head, Head of Sixth Form, Head of Faculty and Head of Year. Kevin’s professionalism was outstanding and he set a high standard in all that he did.

Dr Paul Kelly (1973 – 1980) was the speaker at the December 2018 Prize Giving. Paul attended the University of Edinburgh where he studied Medicine. His career took him to Leeds and London. He is now Lead Consultant at the Essex Cardio-Thoracic Centre and at Southend Hospital. It was never in question whether Paul would achieve great things in whatever field he chose and while at school he was awarded amongst many others, The Coopers’ Company Prize for Academic Excellence. Paul’s sister Samantha and his brothers Niall and Ian also attended the school.

2018 saw landmark birthdays for former members of staff: Mrs Doris Peat M.B.E. and Mr Walter (Wally) Walbourne celebrated their ninetieth birthdays. Mrs Sheila Libman reached ninety in September 2018 but passed away in May 2019. Sheila taught maths during the 1970s and 1980s and was in charge of careers education. Sheila’s dog Max was a regular feature of school life. Many fine and affectionate tributes were paid to Sheila on Face Book by her former students and I was privileged to be asked to pay tribute to her time at our school at the humanist celebration of her life at Ingatestone cemetery.

We are grateful to Terry Dansey for informing us of the death at eighty-nine of Liveryman and Former Master of the Company Alan Hall. Alan attended the school in Bow and later founded in Stratford, Hall and Ryan Cooperage. Alan was an entrepreneur and had companies in transport and warehousing, a restaurant in Portugal, a hotel and two public houses, one of which was in the USA. At one time Alan employed six hundred and twenty people. Alan and his wife Judi, who survives him and to whom we extend our condolences lived latterly in a house built by Queen Victoria on the Isle of Wight.

In April 2019 Ivan Broadis possibly the oldest surviving old Cooperian (1934 – 39) passed away at the age of ninety-six. Better known as “Ivor”, he was signed by Tottenham in 1939 and was a navigator in the RAF during the war. Ivor was the oldest surviving England International. I am grateful to Colin Churchett for this information.

Paul “Bill” Williams passed away in 2018 aged 92 and although only at the Bow school for four years made a tremendous impact on his students. Bill had worked at St Bees School in Cumbria before he moved to London. His teaching was said to be “inspirational” and he is remembered as “a teacher of real distinction”; many of his students kept in touch with him, not only the highly academic but one whose only O level was in English. Bill moved to the Thomas Huxley College in Ealing to train would-be English teachers and thence to the Institute of Education. He was an active member of the National Association of the Teachers of English. During his long retirement Bill lived with his partner in Camden Town and greatly enjoyed the cultural life of London.
I received a letter from Anne Garland (formerly Straughan) now living in Cumbria to inform our “Coborn ladies” that Anne Smith passed away in December 2019. Anne Smith taught needlework at the Bow school and was noted for her high standards and great patience with the girls. She is remembered as a sympathetic and supportive form tutor and a stalwart of trips to Marchant’s Hill where she dealt kindly with many a home-sick girl. Anne Smith was always equipped with a large bag of apples which were to ensure that the girls ate properly.

At the end of 2019 and after what one of her friends described as a “brief and brutal” battle with cancer Natasha Moreno-Roberts passed away aged only forty, leaving two daughters Layla and Emilia aged only seven and nine years old. Natasha was diagnosed with colon cancer in August 2019 but whilst undergoing treatment and with the help of family, friends and the staff and pupils at her daughters’ primary school in Ipswich, raised nearly £5000 for a local hospice. Natasha had established a company, Verdant Streets that dealt with sustainability, community and town planning. After leaving school in 1997 Natasha gained a BSC in Environmental Studies and an MA in International Relations and Development Studies. Natasha is remembered very fondly by her former teachers and we wish to extend our sympathy to Layla and Emilia and the rest of her family and the many close friends who were at school with her.

Natasha Moreno-Roberts

In July 2018 Mrs Sylvia Findlay (English and Head of Year) celebrated her eightieth birthday at a wonderful garden party hosted by her children alumni Chris and Tracey Burdett

Sylvia was made Volunteer of the Year for her work at the Royal Academy and especially her commitment to the RA’s Access programme for children with special educational needs and those adults suffering from dementia. Sylvia escorts blind and visually impaired visitors around the RA and often accompanies wheelchair users around exhibitions. The RA describes Sylvia as being “completely selfless in the amount of time and energy that she gives supporting our endeavours and has positively impacted so many people’s lives”.

Sylvia’s former students will recognise these, the qualities that made her such a well-loved member of staff. Since her retirement Sylvia and her husband Neil a former Head of Music have travelled extensively in Latin America, South Asia and Africa. They both share a passion for opera and are often to be seen at Covent Garden where they sometimes encounter Ms Helen Gilheany and Mr David Young.

Sylvia Findlay

Congratulations must go to alumna Sheila Atim who received the M.B.E in the recent Honour’s List for her work in the theatre. Sheila recently starred in a much acclaimed Agatha Christie thriller “The Pale Horse”. Jonnie Reardon has made a career in the theatre and staged the recent production of “Toast” a musical about the life of Nigel Slater. Anita Dobson was once again treading the boards in “Fiddler on the Roof” in the West End.

Sheila Atim MBE  Jonnie Reardon  Anita Dobson
Alta Hatcher obtained her Certificate of Higher Education and is now studying for her B.A. Honours in English Language and Literature with the Open University. Alta is currently writing a fantasy novel and we wish her well in all her endeavours.

Simon Smith a former School Captain has made a highly successful career in film and television. Simon has been editing and producing some well-known programmes including the highly acclaimed "Chernobyl", National Treasure, Electric Dreams, Endeavour and Victoria. Simon was recently awarded an Emmy for his work on Chernobyl.

Simon’s interest in film began when Mrs Sandra Bunting allocated him a work experience placement with a TV company. Simon studied the subject at The South Bank University. He now lives with his family in Brighton.

Congratulations go to Charley Monaghan who gained her MSc in Edinburgh, Ashleigh Draper for her BSc (Hons) and MBBS (Distinction), Leo Yang who gained a BA (2.1), Ainslie Plews who obtained a Master of Architecture (2.1) from Cardiff University and Amie Hampshire-Gill who obtained a BA in history with first class honours from Roehampton University. Amie was also awarded a special award for community service. Matthew Ashby graduated with a degree (2.1) in Political Science from Birmingham and Ellie Taylor obtained a BSc (Hons) in Diagnostic Radiotherapy from St George’s University, London. We send congratulations to Amy Lane who received her MSc in Functional Omics from Imperial College. She is now an Associate Scientist with Gamma Delta Therapeutics and is starting a PhD in immunotherapy.

Joseph Harrison has obtained a BSc in Physical Geography from Royal Holloway London University. Joe is now studying for an MA and would like eventually to do a PhD.

Katie Power has just graduated with first class honours in history from the University of Roehampton. Whilst there, she founded and was President of the History Society, she organised events relating to the Great War and amongst other things trips around places of historical interest for international students including one to the East End focussing on Jack the Ripper and Anti-Semitism. To encourage the passion she clearly has for the subject Katie has written “explorer’s programmes” for young children and put these into operation in Junior Schools. Katie’s work as a “change maker” was recognised by the University. Katie will study for an MA in history at University College, London.
Congratulations must go to Tom Ritchie who was awarded his PHD this year. Tom’s mathematical prowess was quickly recognised and he has obtained an academic position as a Postdoctoral researcher at the Mathematical Institute at the University of Oxford. Tom prepared his doctoral thesis while being supervised at the Science Museum. Tom’s thesis examined the links between computing and mathematics in the UK, India and the USA.

The Royal Air Force celebrated its centenary in 2018. Flight-Lieutenant M.L.Smith BSc RAF was selected to be an usher at the service held to commemorate this milestone and to attend to members of the Royal family. The photograph shows Matthew IN Westminster Abbey. In the next Bugle we will hear more of Matthew’s training and life in one of the armed forces.

Another historian Ruhi Singha (2010-2017) is making an impact: Ruhi’s essay examining why the twentieth century was the most violent was selected to be read at the British Undergraduate Historical Association conference. Thousands of essays were submitted and Ruhi’s was chosen, it was published in the British Historical Journal in 2018 and Ruhi was invited to the conference where she met many of the world’s most celebrated historians.

A message of appreciation for The Bugle came from Mark Woodward (1976 -84) who has just retired after thirty-four years as an Insurance Broker. Mark Lives in Kent with his family and he is now busily engaged in restoring his farmhouse.

Abbi Mitchell (2003 -2010) graduated from Peterhouse College, Cambridge in 2013 with a degree in history and then obtained an MA from the University of Southern California, where she developed the skills necessary for her ensuing career in publishing. Earlier this year Abbi wrote a third of the text and edited “Women: Our History”, published by Toucan books in the UK and the USA it is the first large, illustrated non-fiction book on the subject. Abbi compiled a book on The American Civil war and prepared a History of Mathematical Ideas for Dorling Kindersley. Abbi is considering doing a PhD in creative writing with a focus on history at the University of Southampton.
Adam Goldsmith (1991 -1998) is a full time record producer and recording engineer specialising in classical music and in particular brass. After studying the trombone at the Royal Northern College of Music, Adam has worked with many celebrated musicians like Philip Cobb, principal with the London Symphony Orchestra performing with the Band of the RAF, Mike Lovatt of the BBC Big Band, the John Wilson Orchestra and the King’s Singers. As a performing musician Adam has travelled to the USA, Europe, Scandinavia and Australia. Adam spent an extra year at school studying music technology; he still sees many of the close friends he made at school who are employed in the arts and music, many in the West End, freelancing with major orchestras, working with recording companies or running arts festivals. Adam comments that “all that time hanging out in the music department wasn’t wasted”. Many will recall Adam and his peer’s time at school as being a “Golden Age” in music making. Under Tim Lichfield and Jan Bristow new musical heights were reached but we were in those days greatly advantaged in that the school had a greater say on who would be offered a place.

It was good to hear from Ian Gooden (1972 – 1980) who recalls speaking in 1974 at the official opening of the school by the then Lord Mayor Sir Murray Fox. Ian was also one of Cliff Andrews’ stage crew who were responsible for creating many brilliant and intricate sets one of which was “pruned” during the last performance of The Pirates of Penzance by Martin Jolly. Ian has had a career in local government and after obtaining a Certificate in Municipal Government specialised in HR and personnel management and is now a Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. His career has taken him to Bristol, Cardiff and finally Lincoln where he lives with his wife, his daughter who wishes to study history at University and his son who attends the Kings Grammar School. He has been a governor at Baroness Thatcher’s school, Kesteven Girls Grammar School in Grantham.

Unsurprisingly some of the strongest ties and bonds at school were made during the war years. In fact alumni, Greg Perry has written a book called “The Coopers’ Company’s School in Frome 1939 – 1945” that details the experiences of the boys who were evacuated to rural Somerset. We have also heard form Lionel Russell who was one of the evacuees and who would like to hear from any of his school fellows who shared these experiences. Do email me at bwe@cooperscoborn.co.uk if you wish to be put in touch with Lionel. Terence Kirkman (1949 – 1956) has been in touch; Terence lived in Hornchurch, joined the school in the second form when Alfred White was the Head Master and travelled daily to Mile End. To this day Terence has a photo of a group of Coopers’ boys on his wall. He remembers with affection the late Bernard Bresslaw who was in the sixth form prior to his joining RADA. Bernard and Terence belonged to the school’s Scout Group, the 11th Stepney which performed their own gang-show in the area that was known as the “Cooper’s Capers”!
Below are photographs sent in from Dr. John Gingell a leading light in the Class of ’55, a group of about twenty to thirty Old Cooperians who have met regularly over the last fourteen years or so. John describes the group as a “mixed bunch” that includes a stone mason, academics, multi-millionaires, divers, actors etc. John is thinking about compiling a book about this diverse group. The photographs show the boys as they were on a school trip at the end of the 1950s, at one of their meetings, a final visit to their school in Tredegar Square before the building was converted into flats. The group formed around a nucleus of friends shared between John Connor and Roger Ainger. John Gingell was searching for an old school friend Colin Salmon (whom he eventually found in Costa Rica) when he reconnected with his former classmates. There are frequent informal gatherings but one memorable event took place at the RAC Club for the Class of ’55 and their partners but which in good Coopers’ tradition was anything but formal and sedate. John maintains what unites the group is the sense of place, the same roots and shared experiences of East End life in the 50s and 60s; as he says “they get together, rub along and laugh a lot”.

John grew up on the Isle of Dogs and having passed the 11+ examination started life at Coopers in 1955. John excelled not only academically winning the Old Boys Essay Prize and the Bernard Pitt Memorial Prize but he was rugby captain and played for Essex, the Eastern Counties and the North of the Thames Teams. John studied History at Sussex where he also developed a passion for philosophy and where he also obtained a Master’s degree in that subject. This was followed by a PhD in philosophy at Reading University. John lectured in Sierra Leone, at Sussex, Northampton and Leicester Universities and is the author of six books on the philosophy of education. During a recent encounter with an educational expert, John was told that “no one learned anything at school” but as he commented the expert had clearly not been to Coopers! John says that he owes a large debt of gratitude to the school. Many of us have reason to be grateful to the 1944 Education Act which gave many working class children a good state education and presented us with opportunities unavailable to our parents. John was taught English by Tony Davis who loaned him Saturday Night and Sunday Morning much to the indignation of John’s mother!

The Class of ’55 then....

And now!!!
John has kindly informed me that alumnus and billionaire Dennis Gillings one of the Class of ’55, received a knighthood in the recent honour’s list. Sir Dennis attended Exeter University and obtained a BSc in 1966 and a PhD in 1972 both in mathematics. Sir Dennis lectured in biostatistics at the University of North Carolina before setting up Quintiles, a clinical research company one of the largest and most successful in the world. The knighthood was for “services to the Advancement of Dementia and to Life Sciences Research”. Sir Dennis and neurologist and entrepreneur Lady Mireille Gillings donated ten million pounds to Exeter University to fund research fellowships in health innovation.

Huw West (1975-82) started his school life under the watchful eye of Mrs Jenny Hollins in class 1JH4 a form of which I have the very fondest of memories. He has many good memories of school including the banter between teachers and students and a trip to the Rhineland with Miss Joan Sweeting. After graduating in Civil Engineering from the University of Southampton, Huw moved to Peterborough and is now a Managing Director of a firm of Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers. Huw’s cousins, Anna and Peter Lawson attended the school and Anna has recently become a mother.

A contemporary of Huw’s, Kate Gardner (formerly Worthington) left school and studied at the College of St Hild and St Bede’s in Durham. After graduating with a 2.1 in Geography Kate was accepted on a graduate trainee scheme with British Rail and then went into the retail industry specialising in logistics dealing with issues such as warehousing and transport with companies like Sainsbury’s, Asda and the Coop. Kate maintains that she has always retained a wide knowledge of history and in her next career with the National Trust, Kate is able to use this to good effect. Based with her family in historic York, Kate is the Commercial Consultancy Manager for northern England; Kate deals with the NTs shops, cafes, restaurants and holiday lets in that beautiful part of the country which includes properties like Fountains Abbey and Quarry Bank Mill.

Rhiannon Munson-Hobbs gained a BA (Hons) in Theatre Dance and has a career as a performer that has taken her to China, the Seychelles, Togo, and Morocco and to most European countries. Rhiannon spent a great deal of time performing in Paris where she was can-can soloist and resident showgirl at La Nouvelle Eve and A la Folie Revue where she was lead dancer. Rhiannon has appeared on TV in Europe and has performed with the renowned Irish Company “The Spirit of the Dance”. Rhiannon is currently working in London in the burlesque revue, The Folly Mixtures and when not on stage she teaches dance including ballet. Rhiannon with her some of her colleagues have established their own company

It was good to hear from Shenai Doughty who having graduated with an LLB (Hons) from Southampton University decided to have a career in accountancy. When she is fully qualified and has completed her examinations Shenai would like to work in forensic accountancy. Shenai lives in Cranham with her partner and a near neighbour is Alex Miller who is now teaching. Shenai’s cousin former student Suzanne Scatliffe is married to Richard Cumbers and they are living in Kent. Shenai comments that “I really enjoyed going to Coopers’ Coborn, we had absolutely brilliant teachers”. We wish Shenai well in her career and if she is committed to her career as she was to her education we are certain that she will achieve her goal.

Keith Newton (1981-1987) is an inspiration as he has recently been awarded a bronze medal – narrowly missing the silver - in the M50 Triple Jump at the European Masters Athletics Championship held in Jesolo in Italy. Keith has been involved in competitive athletics for male athletes between the ages of fifty and fifty-four since 2008 and has accumulated an impressive six bronze and one silver medal. Keith, as he was at school is very self-disciplined and dedicated to his sport and he is now focussed on the next World and European competitions. Congratulations Keith!
While Loretta Chalkey (formerly Dickson) was running a marathon in Reading she encountered alumni Andy Spaak who on that occasion was the physiotherapist who enabled Loretta to finish her thirty mile run.

While at school Loretta admits she was not a particularly notable athlete but started her half marathon and marathon running career in 2013 in Brentwood with seventeen friends, including former students Louise and Emma Claridge, Anna Meadows (formerly Perriera) and Lucy Gibb Stuart (formerly French). Lucy’s husband Campbell had sustained a serious head injury and our girls were raising money for the Headway Brain Injury Trust. Loretta said that this experience took her “out of her comfort zone” and since then she has run in the London Marathon and other provincial ones. In the Virgin London Marathon Loretta raised three thousand pounds for the Headway Trust which she continues to support. Loretta hopes to run in the London Marathon for elite runners but her plans to go to Boston (USA) were temporarily interrupted by impending motherhood! Loretta has informed us that Lucy’s husband Campbell has now been able to return home and we wish both he and Lucy well.

Loretta Chalkey

David Harvey has had an interesting and successful career in higher education. David was a mechanical engineering student at Manchester University but transferred to Huddersfield Polytechnic where he studied Marketing and Engineering. After a short spell in industry he was invited to lecture at Huddersfield a post that he retained for twenty-seven years, during which time the polytechnic became a university and David obtained his PhD. David was invited by the Warwick Manufacturing Group to lecture as a Senior Teaching Fellow at Warwick University. David is married to Halina and they have a daughter and a son who studied Chinese at Oxford and who is now studying for an MA in Shanghai. David said that his passion for China was fostered by a project that he undertook in school and this enthusiasm was passed to his son.

David’s sister Alison gained a 1st class honours degree in Fine Art from Leeds University and since then has achieved great success as an Art Director and Production Designer in the world on TV and film. Alison has been nominated for Emmy and Bafta awards in her field and has won the prestigious British Film Designers Guild Award for her work on The Crown. Alison began her career working for the BBC on “Eastenders” and has worked on an impressive list of productions that include Silent Witness, Primeval, Sherlock Holmes and Beauty and the Beast. Alison lives in Ealing with her partner and teenage son.
Coopers’ Coborn has in the past produced many fine singers and performers. April Goss has an outstanding soprano voice and is a young singer that we are sure to hear more of in the future. From an early age April won many local singing competitions and studied at the Guildhall throughout her time at school. April studied at the Royal Academy and obtained a BMus (Hons). Her awards include the Stanley Wise Music Award (the Worshipful Company of Bakers) and the Countess of Munster Musical Trust Derek Butler Award. April was recognised as a Trinity Laban Scholar. Whist at the Royal Academy April sang many Mozart roles and her ambition is to sing Susanna from The Marriage of Figaro at a major Opera house. Given that April now studies with the celebrated soprano Theresa Cahill this is more than likely. We wish her well!

Those readers who are fortunate enough to have attended the Mansion House dinner, given annually by the Worshipful Company of Coopers to mark the installation of the new Lord Mayor will have heard the beautiful voice of Rebecca Silverman. Rebecca is able to sing in opera, oratorio and lieder and has in fact been singing since she was eleven. Rachael’s first taste of the world of “real” opera occurred when she played the lead in “Ludd and Isis” a specially written piece to mark the opening of Royal Opera Centre at Purfleet. In 2016 Rebecca was recognised as the Essex Young Musician of the Year. Rebecca studied at the Royal College of Music where in 2017 she obtained a 1st class honours degree in music and in 2018 she gained a Master’s Diploma in Performance. In 2018 she was awarded the prestigious Freda Parry Classical Singing Scholarship. Rebecca’s father, Stephen, was a former alumnus of the Bow school and was recognised as a fine performer and singer.

Our third budding Diva is Joanne Marie Skillett who was described in the London Evening Standard as being “charming, likeable and sings like a dream”. Joanne’s promise and skill as a singer has been recognised in many awards including the English Touring Opera Young Singer 2018 and by the Worshipful Company of Musicians Concordia Foundation Founder’s Prize. Joanne has already sung in venues like the Wigmore Hall, St. John’s Smith Square, the Barbican and the Purcell Room. Joanne has a BMus and a Master’s Distinction from the Royal Academy and an Artistic Diploma from the Guildhall. Joanne is a qualified teacher and supports the work of Corbets Tey School. A glance at Joanne’s website reveals the degree of both her talent and the breadth of experience as a performer from principal parts in Gilbert and Sullivan to the demanding roles in Puccini, Bizet and Mozart.

I am uncertain whether Heather or “Hetty” Loxton would wish to be termed a “diva” but she has the qualifications for being thus termed even if her path has swung in another direction. After a chance encounter in Upminster with Heather and her mother (a former and much respected Educational Welfare Officer at school) I discovered that Heather is the lead vocalist and violin player in a professional group called “Hetty and the Jazzato Band”. Heather studied at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, Lancaster University and at a Conservatoire in Bologna. The Jazzato Band performs in Italian and English and offers what their website calls “a taste of la dolce vita with a modern twist on vintage, classical, Italian songs, gypsy- jazz and swing”. Hetty and her fellow musicians have performed to great acclaim all over the UK and Europe. You can hear Hetty singing on You Tube.
Jessica Kortbeek (formerly Garrod 2005-12) is a professional military musician playing the flute and saxophone and like those listed above is a product of a “golden age of music” at our school. Jessica has appeared with the band of the Royal Marines at prestigious events like the Edinburgh Tattoo and the Mountbatten Festival of Music at the Royal Albert Hall. She is now living in Devonshire and working at the Royal Marines Commando Training Centre where she will be joined by Michael, her husband early in 2020. Michael is currently a bugler in the Royal Marines in Scotland.

While the voice of alumna Ann Taylor directs and informs our daily journeys over much of the transport network in London it is good to know that trains on the Circle, District, Bakerloo and Hammersmith and City Lines are kept safe and in good order by alumnus Matthew Van Royen. Matthew studied mechanical engineering at Nottingham University and then secured a placement on a graduate scheme with London Transport. In 2012 he became a Chartered Engineer (Institute of Mechanical Engineering). Matthew writes “As a Londoner it’s important to support these assets which contribute so much to life in our city and which I see as an engine for social change and the improvement of people’s opportunities”. Matthew travelled to school from east London and is grateful for the opportunities that our school afforded in enabling him to reach his full potential. Matthew was introduced to his wife Elaine by James Caspell (who continues to do great work in northwest London on the Grenfell estate) and he lives in Walthamstow and has two sons Wilfred and Ezra.

Following a successful year as School Captain Laurence Watts went to Queen’s College in Cambridge and studied Economics after which he has a successful career in the financial sector, working for J.P.Morgan, IING Barings and Barclay’s Capital. A thirst for travel saw him transfer to Singapore and then to San Diego since when Laurence has been a freelance journalist and author. Laurence has written for the Pink Paper, been published by CNN, the BBC, the IR Mag, The Guardian, the Gay Times and the Financial Times. He made a major contribution to “The Last Word” – the final part of Quentin Crisp’s biography and has written with Steve Russell “Life after Philip Morris” a sequel to “I love you Philip Morris” which was made into a film. Steve Russell is serving several life sentences in prison. This year his latest collaboration with Monica F Helms was published and details the life of the creator of the trans-flag and the struggle that she endured for recognition as a woman. Laurence is also working in the financial sector in the USA and is a managing director of the Gilmartin Group which offers advice to companies on finance, policy and strategy. Laurence announced on Facebook that he had been to every country on the planet. A first for a Coopers Coborn alumnus I suspect!

Laura Louise Hodgson, known professionally as “Elle L” is in the vanguard of the movement to make the fashion industry more sustainable. She has worked with the BBC, CNN and Sir David Attenborough on a conservation programme and helped to fund raise over 1.5 million pounds for conservation charities. Laura-Louise also has a musical career as a composer, performer and recording artist and her first single “Circles” was used by Lacoste in 2018. Laura-Louise is currently working on her debut album. In addition she has curated a project on fashion sustainability that was displayed at an environmental conference held in Nairobi and has worked with the United Nations Fashion Alliance for whom she is now a Global Ambassador to Fashion for Conservation. Laura Louise has also made podcasts and videos on the subject. In October, in Los Angeles, Laura Louise helped launch to VIPs and the media, the sustainable Magpies and Peacocks Conscious Fashion Pop-Up idea. She presented this concept at London Fashion week and has worked with Michael Stanley-Jones head of the UN Alliance on sustainable fashion. Laura Louise is also a successful model. A truly versatile Renaissance woman!
It was good to hear from Grace Agate-Bacon who was the third woman to finish in a recent Sikhs in the City half-marathon. Grace is hoping to enter this city marathon in 2020. Grace was in the school cross-country team in 2002 and has fond memories of both the Argyle Run (a cause of dread and sleepless nights for many) and of the enthusiasm of Mrs Shona Barrett.

This edition of the Bugle is out much than I had anticipated and I apologise for this. However, I make no apologies for the length of this edition and I am only sorry that I had to leave much news out until next time. I wish also to thank Mrs Liz Evans, without whom this newsletter would not see the light of day.

Barry Wellington

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