



CRESCAT IN HORAS DOCTRINA

The Old Lennensian



Newsletter of the Old Lennensians Association

Autumn Edition

September 2026



A Word from the Editor

"There is a giant asleep within everyone. When that giant awakes, miracles happen."
Frederick Faust

When I was fortunate enough to meet Sarah Hartshorn, the last Principal, she told me that she would do all she could to rouse the sleeping giant that was KES. She did a wonderful job and put the school well on the way to being one of the best schools in Norfolk, which it certainly was at times during its era as a Grammar School. I have tried

to convince many people that the past is very important but that you cannot live in it. Rather we should build on it and be inspired by it. Current Principal Darren Hollingsworth values tradition and Heritage extremely highly and has built on Sarah's work so that, once again, our old school is one to be proud of. In truth, I always have been. I know what it did for me and I can see exactly what the school is doing for today's youngsters. There were a number of OLs who felt that we couldn't celebrate anything after 1979. No one who has worked in Education could agree with that. A good school is one which takes whatever pupils it has and helps them to become the best they can be.

Grammar, Comprehensive, Bi-Lateral or Academy, it really doesn't matter what you call a school, it's what it achieves that matters most. Darren's emphasis on mutual respect, discipline, listening to the other point of view and meeting challenges is getting the very best out of the pupils. Just as the Old Lennensians Association belongs to any pupil who ever attended the school, it also exists to serve and support the school in anyway it can. We have never been as welcome in the school as we are now. We have a presence. We have a library named after us and we have funded many initiatives designed to give all pupils the chance of the best education possible. We have funded special year 11 ties in order to give all those pupils a sense of pride and belonging. Those feelings bring out the best in people, and I would like to see us continue to support the school as fully as we can.

I know too that the staff have bought into Darren's vision and share my appreciation of what has been achieved. There is a real sense of teamwork evident in the school and a lot of obvious expertise in the classrooms and on the fields. As a former Head of English, I have seen at close quarters how strong that Department is. It has been brilliantly led by Ian Corns who has now retired but will still be a presence in school on supply. I am glad of that because I have got to know him well over the years. His philosophy of fostering debate, informed scepticism and developing an individual voice chimes perfectly with mine. We live in a society which sometimes attempts to stifle debate. In my view we cannot have a civilised society without it.

This year's exam results have been very impressive, particularly the A Level ones, and I know that the Trustees will be very anxious to discuss them and to congratulate the Principal and the staff on reaching ever higher standards. The school is now on the brink of being judged Outstanding, and ,increasingly, KES is becoming the school of choice. Look out for a return of the school's traditional badge and some very exciting building plans. The future looks bright. The giant is awake.

Andrew Stephen, Chairman
School House 1964-71



A Word from the Headteacher

Dear Old Lennensians,

It is with great pride that I write to you as we open another exciting chapter in the story of KES. This Autumn brings with it a great deal to celebrate, and I am delighted to share some of our recent successes with you.

This summer's A Level results were, once again, the best in the school's history under the current performance measures. A testament to the hard work of our students and the dedication of our staff, and further evidence that the standards we set ourselves continue to rise year on year.

Our GCSE results, by contrast, were not as strong as last year's. I want to be open about that with you, as I always try to be. However, this outcome was entirely in line with what we had predicted for this particular cohort, and it did not come as a surprise to us. What gives me real confidence is the strength and potential of the cohort now coming through the school, and I am extremely optimistic about what they will go on to achieve.

I am equally pleased to report that our school roll has reached record numbers, with 240 pupils joining us in Year 7 this September. It is a privilege to welcome so many new First Years into the KES family, and a clear sign of the confidence that families continue to place in us.

Alongside this growth and academic success, we remain as committed as ever to the values that have defined this school for generations. Manners, courtesy and mutual respect sit at the very heart of life at KES, and we continue to draw deeply on our heritage as we instil these principles in every pupil who passes through our gates. Academic excellence matters enormously to us, but so too does the character of the young people we send out into the world and it is that combination, rooted in tradition, that I believe makes KES what it is.

I remain immensely proud to serve as Principal of this school, and prouder still of everything our pupils and staff achieve, day in and day out.

Finally, I want to remind you all of the open invitation to any and all Old Lennensians. Please do come and visit us during the school day. You will always be made welcome. Our current pupils gain so much from meeting those who walked these corridors before them, and I would be delighted to welcome you back to KES.

*With very best wishes,
Darren Hollingsworth*



Salvete

We would like to trace any other surviving Grammar School staff (initially) and then any long-serving staff from KES post 1979. Finding contact details is not always easy so we would appreciate your help with this. Expanding our Honorary Membership will take time but we will do it. We are happy to receive nominations of worthy candidates.

Members enrolled since last Newsletter

Last name	
Danny	Gay
Jane	Proctor
Lili	Hadjou
Barbara	Backham
Ben	Skipper
Mariegold	Nicols
Sally	Nurse
Ross	McNeil
Frankie	Walder
Ben	Stek
Rachel	Gedge
Lucy	Koenisberger



The above are members of KES staff who are former pupils. We are very glad to have them as members.

Ian Corns-Honorary Member

Ian Holliday- School House 1963-70

Valete

I am always keen to include tributes to any former pupils who have died. Sadly, we don't hear about everyone, for a variety of reasons. We are all entitled to a few kind words of Remembrance, which is why I am happy to include retrospective obituaries.

With sadness we record the deaths of the following former pupils and staff and we offer our condolences to their families:

Piers BISHOP

Kevin CHANDLER York House 1963-68

David COBBOLD Windsor House 1945-1953

Brian REYNOLDS School House 1960- 1967

Paul STAIN

Piers Bishop

It is obvious that Piers Bishop was an exceptional human being. As a child prodigy he appeared in many advertisements depicting the ideal child and then, when a little older,



he appeared in a number of very well known films, including *Ballad In Blue* where he starred with the legendary Ray Charles. He might well have gone on to make a career in Films but his parents moved to Norfolk. After finishing school at KES, he became a well known DJ appearing at places all along the North Norfolk coast. It would be fair to say that his academic career was undistinguished, but he was a colourful character in search of ways of expressing his obvious creativity and invention. Moving back

to London, he continued as a DJ but gradually became more and more in Fine Arts.

He dipped in and out of college and finally obtained his Bachelor's Degree in 2007, achieving what he might have done straight after school. Importantly, he had found his own way to it. He created radically new and impressive forms of Art using digital technology and, increasingly, he experimented with Adrian Dowle, making music. He died young but what a difference he made to the Art world. Those with great talent rarely follow accepted conventions and we should be very glad that they don't. A number of OLS failed to shine at KES but went on to make huge contributions. Our school lives add to that curious mix which is our personality and is always part of what we achieve.

Andrew





A lot of the information I had about Piers came from his lifelong friend Adrian Dowle who tells me that his nickname at school was Soapy. A Norfolk accent makes Piers sound like Pears. He had started making an album of songs with Piers when he heard of his sudden death. There was perhaps a time when the school was more interested in sport and academic success. Piers was not a systems man and I am grateful to Adrian for letting me know about him.

Kevin Chandler, brother of fellow KES pupil Barry was a distinguished sportsman. Among other things, he played football and cricket for the first eleven. He played football for the Ols for several years.

DAVID G COBBOLD 1937-2026

David first attended King Edward VII in 1945 as a pupil in the Preparatory Department of the school before entering the main school in September 1948.

During his time at school, he was a member of the Combined Cadet Force and served in the Royal Air Force as a National Serviceman.

Following his demobilisation his future career was in the world of finance, bank, ship's Purser in the Merchant Navy and a Building Society.

In 2006 an informal meeting was held at the school, hosted by David and his close friend John Turtle and a Committee was formed.

John Turtle (Chairman) John Marsters (Vice Chairman David Cobbold (Treasurer) Don Oliver (Secretary) Bob Booth, John "Tid" Loughland and Ken Mace .

David was instrumental in organising a Reunion Dinner on Saturday 1st July that year.

This had to be held at venues in Wisbech and Knights Hill because it was impossible to find a suitable venue to accommodate the 400 attendees. This a resounding success with ex-pupils travelling from all over the world to attend. This was something David was very proud of to have accomplished.

In addition to acting as Treasurer, he was the founder Newsletter Editor.

David also played a significant part in organising the restoration of the portraits displayed in the Assembly Hall.

He relinquished his position as treasure to Mike Tagg and that of Newsletter Editor .

He remained a stalwart member of the Committee until 2017 when he experienced some health issues but until his recent death remained interested in the Association and its link to the school.

From the time the Old Lennensians' reformation David became a close personal friend sharing reminiscences via regular telephone conversations and will be missed by those who were fortunate to have known him.

Don Oliver Keene-Gloucester 1948-54

David Cobbold

I didn't know David from school days as he had left before I arrived

but many years later we both served on the Old Lennensians' Association Committee. Initially there were only former grammar school pupils involved but with the advent of co-education in 1979 some of us felt that the Association needed to attract members from the post grammar school era. David was a very active member of the Association for many years and was the leading light behind the success of the school's centenary celebrations to mark the opening of the new buildings on the Gaywood Road site. He was also responsible for the Association paying for the installation of a third memorial board in memory of those ex pupils who gave their lives in the line of duty. I had arranged to go and see David in April and he was looking forward to catching up on KES news. Sadly he phoned me to say that regrettably he was not well enough to see me but he would contact me when he was feeling better. He was always interested in how the school was progressing



and liked nothing more than reminiscing about days long gone as well as current changes. I am glad that I had the privilege of calling him a friend

Michael Fillenham, BEM Keene 1957-63

DAVID COBBOLD – AN APPRECIATION

My wife, Angela, and I were deeply saddened by the unwelcome news that David had died.

He would have been 16 when I arrived at KES in September 1954 and I do not remember him from that time. I met him briefly at our 2006 reunion which he and his great friend, John Turtle, had worked so hard to organise and was so grateful for what they had done in helping to rekindle old friendships that we sent him a Christmas card that year, telling him of our appreciation. Every year since then we have exchanged cards and increasingly long letters - in David's case, until recently, in immaculate handwriting. In the years after 2006 we met a few times at OL lunches and had occasional telephone conversations. I often promised to visit the next time I came back to Norfolk but my motivations to visit have diminished with increasing age and the passing of family. I have yet to make the journey and now, sadly, it's too late. I am sure that David's contemporaries have a closer and more accurate knowledge of his school days and career but I feel that, through our letters, I came to know him reasonably well over the last 20 years and would like to offer this appreciation.

David was, like many of us I suspect, “old school”. He believed in doing things properly, in the right way, maintaining standards. He lamented the current trends of “wokery”, “cancel culture” and “the chaos and turmoil in this once great country – and the world”. We both agreed that this is no longer the country in which we had expected and hoped to grow old. However, we plod on doing what we can, when we can with what we have. David's great contribution was engineering the resurrection of the Old Lennensian Association which has so much helped to brighten our old age. He and John Turtle, together with others, I'm sure, must have worked long hours over weeks and months to organise the 2006 Reunion, sending out notifications and coordinating the

responses. That the evening dinner had to be held across two venues rather than just the one that had originally been earmarked, bears witness to the enthusiasm with which it was embraced.

If I had to choose one quality that defined David it would be loyalty. He probably did more than anyone else to perpetuate and honour the memory of his school friend, Peter Wormall. Peter always wanted to be a pilot in the RAF. I can remember him winning the Mile in his last year in school. His running style seemed to me to reflect his personality – dogged and determined. He went to RAF Cranwell and was subsequently commissioned as a Pilot Officer, stationed at RAF Marham. I can still remember the devastating news when we were told in Assembly in September 1959 that he and the whole crew of his Vickers Valiant bomber had been killed on take off – an accident subsequently attributed to faulty maintenance. He was 22 years old. While many may have forgotten this, David never did. In one of the very early editions of *The Lennensian*, resurrected after 2006, he wrote a report of a small ceremony he and a little band of his contemporaries had conducted at Peter's Commonwealth War Grave headstone in Marham Cemetery, when they had laid a poppy wreath and recited those moving words which we hear on Remembrance Sundays, from Laurence Binyon's poem, "For The Fallen". I suspect it was not the first or the last pilgrimage that David had made to Peter's grave and we often mentioned him in our correspondence.

David did his National Service in the RAF and developed a great love of flying. This is an excerpt from one of his letters: "When, frequently, screaming jets practise dog fights over Wisbech I am reminded of my wonderful time when I was in the RAF sitting beside a pilot who was testing a training aircraft after repair and performed every aerobatic manoeuvre in the book over Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire for one and a half hours. For a 19 year old it was wonderfully exciting". In 2023, he decided to seek another adrenaline rush, undertaking a flight, this time with a lady pilot, in a De Havilland Chipmunk, an aircraft that would have been used as an RAF trainer when he was serving. He sent me the accompanying photographs captioned "Biggles Takes To The Air Again!"



After his National Service David served for 9 years in the Merchant Navy. In one letter he wrote, "I would tell anybody that, if they thought they were big in this world, go to sea in the North Atlantic in January in a Force 10 gale and they would see just how big they are. I have watched as the bows of the ship went under into a 40 foot wave then rose up and the huge cascade of water off the foredeck was awesome. I have walked down the main street in Port Stanley, Falklands, to lay a British Legion cross on the war memorial to a Merchant Navy Chief officer

who went down with the Atlantic Conveyor and stood amongst the penguins on the Weddel Peninsular in the Antarctic”.

After “coming ashore” he sailed on many cruises visiting, among other places, the USA, Canada and New Zealand.

David intended to undertake another cruise in 2023 but was unable to do so because of deteriorating health. Since 2016, he had undergone regular reviews and treatment, mostly under general anaesthetic, for bladder cancer. Every year, he would deliver an update, never failing to mention “the care at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital....which has been brilliant from the outset”. I always told him that, equally, his long term survival owed much to his positive attitude in facing and never lamenting his condition. I am sure that his medical team appreciated this and am willing to bet that he always recorded his thanks to them.

Following his treatments he usually had to have respite care in a care home. Again, he was always positive and complimentary about the homes (apart from the food!) but he remained fiercely independent, determined that he would not live out his days in one. He organised care in his own home in Leverington and never failed to pay tribute to those who helped him – “my



wonderful carer”, “my old friend down the road who helps me with all kinds of small tasks”, his cleaner and the two gentlemen who helped him maintain his “beloved garden”. The fact that he recorded his appreciation of them to me (along with their actual names) suggests that he continually expressed it to them and they reciprocated by going the extra mile for him.

Gardening was David's great passion, particularly growing and tending his rhododendrons which, like everything else, was done thoroughly and meticulously. The

soil in Leverington could not have been suitable for growing the shrubs because he told me how he hired someone with an excavator to dig holes, filling them with ericaceous compost before planting and how, in dry spells, he carried two cans of water daily to each plant and regularly fed them in the growing season - a real labour of love and I'm sure they looked magnificent when they were in bloom.

I used to have a problem reconciling David's often expressed opinion that he didn't particularly enjoy school because he thought there was too much emphasis on sporting achievement, with his enthusiasm and dedication in trying to get us all back after 50 years. Clearly, he treasured the lifelong friendships he had forged while he was there and I think he came to realise that those five or so formative years we spend together can add a significant and irreplaceable value to our lives. David envisaged that a revived Association could not only bring old friends together, it could help to support the work of the present day school – and since 2006 it has gone from strength to strength, continuing to do so. David may not have valued sporting achievement but he took up the challenge, carried the baton and passed it on so that the generations following could

run with it – and they
have! RIP David – you ran a great race!

Mike Trundle Thoresby 1954-61

“...the effect of (his) being on those around (him) was incalculably diffusive: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me....is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs”.

George Eliot's “epitaph” for Dorothea Brooke, her heroine of “Middlemarch” (appropriately adapted!)

David Cobbold

David's central role in the rebirth of the OLA in 2005 and the Centenary Reunion Dinners of 2006 is well covered by Don Oliver's contribution. You can also look at David's four pieces he wrote about these events in the History section of our website. I first met David when I attended the Reunions at KES just before we retired to live in Norfolk. He stood out as one of the committee keen to welcome the next generation of members.

Later as Archives Manager I found him a constant source of reliable knowledge and help especially on items connected with the Boarding House and my Biography of George Martin who was in charge of the Preparatory Department which David himself attended. If David could help he freely did so and I wish I had met him sooner not least that he shared my enthusiasm for respecting and preserving our records.

Bob Childs Keene 1966-72

Liz and I visited David a few years ago because he wanted to present our Archive with photographs he'd taken in 1971 to the Archive. He gave me as a new Chairman every kind of support. Even when he was very ill, he insisted on coming to a Reunion and taking tickets at the door. He was a kind and conscientious man who loved the school and the OLA. He was a remarkable man and I thought the world of him.

Andrew



Brian Reynolds was unusual in the sense that not only did he abhor bullying, he actively prevented and discouraged it. When I started life as a boarder, Brian seemed to have one of the few smiling faces to be found among the bigger boys. He was a fearless hockey goalkeeper but, by his own admission, not particularly academic or keen on study. He left

with A level grades which were "acceptable". I remember him as a genial presence around the house and as someone who was always prepared to lend a hand. During my first school country, I fell over in the treacherous mud, which was so characteristic of Pulkey Wood. I lay face down in the mud and was trampled by a number of enthusiastic runners. Brian stopped, pulled me out of the mud, laughed and told me to get a move on. He noticed people who were struggling, a characteristic he never lost.

When I met him again in Barton Bendish he gave me a tour of the village, driving at breakneck speed. He introduced me to many of the farm staff he'd managed. He'd had a great career as a farm manager and was universally admired. He was quite a character and keen on impromptu speeches! He suffered from Parkinsons Disease for a number of years and published a book called My life in Farming. The proceeds went to the Parkinsons charity. He was unselfish to the last, a larger than life character who I felt privileged to call my friend.

Andrew Stephen

Paul Stain



Councillor Paul Astal-Stain

Active 74 year-old ex-forces entrepreneur.

Industrialist, inventor and published author. Ex Lecturer in Prisons and Secondary Teacher (B.Ed.) in Mathematics, Science and Careers Education.

Member of various charitable fund-raising institutions. Keen to promote activities for local young adult environment.

Certificates of Service to Royal Arch Masonry

Certificates of Service to Royal Arch Masonry

Those of us who were at the Provincial Grand Chapter meeting on the 11th of November will have seen our MEGS, E.Comp Christopher Roach, present Arthur Blamey and Richard Buckler with Certificates of Service to Royal Arch Masonry In Devonshire. Paul Astal Stain was unfortunately unable to attend the Provincial Convocation but was also awarded this honour. On Wednesday 22nd of November our MEGS, accompanied by E.Comp Chris Taylor, PrScE, met with Paul at Tutley Corn Mill to present him with



his award. Paul thanks our MEGS saying that "the award was very appreciated and that he felt very honoured"

Three Certificates of Service to Royal Arch Masonry In Devonshire are awarded each year and, as in 2022, this year's recipients are very worthy of the acclaim as they selflessly do so much behind the scenes.

Arthur has worked his magic as Provincial Grand Charity Steward to say nothing of the great care and attention he puts in to help Cadogan Court. Richard Buckler quietly and selflessly keeps extremely busy in Budleigh Salterton doing whatever job is necessary both in the Royal Arch and the Craft. And Paul Astal - Stain of Dartmoor Chapter has galvanised his unbounding enthusiasm, with the full support of his fellow members to achieve great success in attracting new members.

I am grateful to Chris Cramp for letting me know about Paul. He had been held back for a year at some point but went on to train as a teacher at Whitelands Training College. He won Athletics colours in 1968 and 69, Hockey colours in 1969 and County Athletics colours in 1969. He spent time in the RAF and was a keen Mason. He was also a Parish Councillor for South Brent
Andrew

PETER WILLIMAN

I was deeply saddened and shocked to hear that Peter had died. Despite coming from the same village and attending the same schools, I cannot claim to have known him very well. We were more passing acquaintances than close friends but latterly I came to appreciate and admire him from afar.

Along with two other O Ls, Roger Dix and Norman Whisker, we attended Heacham County Primary School where Peter's father, Frederick, was headmaster and his mother, Gwyneth, school secretary and from there, in 1954, we progressed to KES. Roger, Norman and I were day boys but Peter was a boarder so we had little opportunity to develop our friendship on journeys to and from school. This changed somewhat after we left school and progressed to higher education. If I remember correctly, Peter went to Borough Road Teacher Training College (now Brunel University) in London and it was during the long vacations that I came to know him better when he, Roger and I used to meet at lunchtimes (and long into the afternoon) playing darts and seeing how long we could make halves of bitter last at "The Wheatsheaf" pub (now Tesco Express!) in Heacham.



It was more than 40 years later, at our 2006 reunion, that I met him again. He told me that he had been a headteacher (at that time he was living in Little Beckford in Gloucestershire so I assumed it was at a local school) and worked as an inspector for Ofsted. Clearly, he was highly regarded by Ofsted because he told me in our post reunion sporadic email correspondence that, after retirement, he had undertaken some educational assignments in the United States. Unfortunately, we didn't maintain that correspondence.

The next time I saw Peter was in the Summer of 2012 when I was visiting Heacham, having lunch in a still surviving local pub and found myself standing next to him at the bar, along with his elder brother, Paul. He told me that his father had died, recently, aged 98, and they

had returned to Heacham to scatter his ashes. He also said that he was thinking of moving from Little Beckford to Dorset.

I suspect that move did not take place because, some years ago, letters signed "Peter Williman, Chatteris", started appearing prominently, on a regular basis in The Daily Telegraph. They always expressed trenchant, well argued opinions on current political issues and I looked forward to them. Towards the end of last year the letters stopped appearing and then Andrew delivered the sad news that Peter had died. I had hoped to meet him again at a future reunion to tell him how much his letters brightened my mornings. Unfortunately, that opportunity never arose and I'm sure the editor of The Daily Telegraph misses his contributions as much as I do. RIP Peter.

Mike Trundle

I am always happy to include tributes to OLs, even when there may have been others in an earlier edition. Everyone deserves to be remembered and given credit for what they contributed during their lives.

Officials of the Association

COMMITTEE

President: His Honour Judge Peter Jacobs

Vice Presidents: The Venerable David Fleming, QHC, R. Carter, D. Oliver

Chair: A.C. Stephen

Vice Chair: M. Whittley

Honorary Secretary: M. Starling

Honorary Treasurer: P. Riches

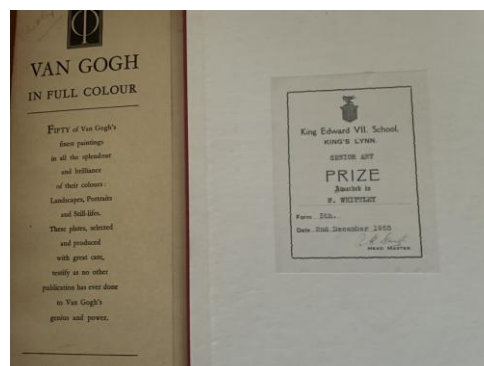
Newsletter Editor: A.C Stephen

Website Manager/Editor: M.J. Walker

Archive Manager/Editor: R. Childs

Ex Officio: Darren Hollingsworth, Principal

Without Portfolio: M. Fillenham, C. Prior, R. Waite



KES Archive

Every school likes to boast a famous former pupil, sporting hero or notable teacher. But how many state schools can claim a master who twice dismissed the greatest cricketer of the Victorian age in the same match?

That is precisely the remarkable, and largely forgotten, story of James Nicholls Worman, a Second Master at King's Lynn Grammar School and one of Norfolk's leading cricketers at the turn of the 20th century.

Today, the name W.G. Grace still echoes through cricket history.

The bearded giant of the game scored more than 54,000 runs, took nearly 3,000 wickets and became the first true superstar of English sport.

His fame stretched far beyond cricket grounds.

Even in 1903, when he was entering the twilight of his career, Grace remained a formidable figure. Just four years earlier he had captained England against Australia at Trent Bridge.



And yet, in August 1903, it was a Lynn schoolmaster who had the final say.

Worman had arrived in Norfolk from Sussex in 1897 and quickly established himself as one of the county's leading fast bowlers, while also contributing valuable runs in the middle order.

Alongside his teaching duties at the Grammar School, he became a key figure in the Norfolk County side.

The county's home fixture against London County at Lakenham in August 1903 promised to be a major attraction.

Grace's team drew crowds wherever it travelled and almost 3,000 spectators turned out in anticipation of seeing the great man at work.

Instead, they witnessed something rather unexpected.

According to contemporary accounts, Grace came to the crease in London County's first innings amid great excitement.

Worman charged in and, with only the fourth ball he delivered to the famous batsman, bowled him for a duck.

The local newspapers could hardly contain their delight.

Norfolk posted 138 in their first innings before dismissing London County for just 67. Forced to follow on, Grace again found himself facing the Lynn schoolmaster.

This time he fared better, making 31 and top-scoring for his side.

But Worman was waiting.

Once again the stumps were disturbed, once again Grace was out bowled, and once again the newspapers sang the praises of the "King's Lynn schoolmaster".

Norfolk completed a comfortable 62-run victory.

Dismissing W.G. Grace once was an achievement but doing it twice in the same match was something else entirely.

Grace remained one of the biggest names in world cricket and even at the age of 55 was still a prized wicket.

For a county player balancing cricket with a full-time teaching career, it was a moment worth savouring.



Norfolk certainly thought so.

The county club presented Worman with one of the match balls, suitably inscribed to commemorate his feat. A photograph of the treasured memento survives in Michael Yaxley's history of Norfolk cricket, accompanied by the proud caption: "Suitably inscribed, the ball with which Worman took Grace's wicket in one innings."

More than a century later, it remains

a tangible reminder of one of Norfolk cricket's most remarkable afternoons.

Worman's cricketing achievements extended well beyond a single match.

Between 1897 and 1908 he took 166 wickets for Norfolk at an average of just over 15 runs each and earned a reputation as one of the county's most effective bowlers.

His contributions helped Norfolk become a respected force in Minor Counties cricket.

He taught at King's Lynn Grammar School and later moved with staff and pupils into the new King Edward VII Grammar School building on Gaywood Road.

A 1905 Panorama photograph, painstakingly examined by members of the Old Lennensians Association, shows Worman sitting among the staff - a tall and distinctive figure whose appearance matches contemporary cricket photographs.

In 1908 he left Norfolk after being appointed Headmaster of Donington Grammar School in Lincolnshire.

Cricket, however, remained a lifelong passion. He continued playing Minor Counties cricket for Lincolnshire and remarkably remained involved in the game until 1934.

The story survived thanks to research by Norfolk cricket historian Michael Yaxley. Robert Childs carried out all the research for the article as the OLA's archives manager, assisted by Michael Walker, who manages the website.

Yet one mystery remains. What became of the inscribed cricket ball?

Did it pass through generations of the Worman family? Does it still sit unnoticed in a drawer, cabinet or attic somewhere in Britain?

If it survives, it is far more than an old cricket ball. It is a unique piece of sporting and educational history - a relic from the day a Lynn schoolmaster humbled the most famous cricketer in the world.

Not once, but twice.

And that is a connection few schools, state or otherwise, could ever hope to match.
Bob Childs

Bob's article was featured in the Lynn News, a framed copy of which can be seen on the wall at KES. As an archivist and researcher, Bob is incomparable. It is because of him that we know so many things that would otherwise have been lost. I doff my cap to him.



Forthcoming Events

I hope that all these events will be popular. The OLA can offer a delightful opportunity for nostalgia as well as the opportunity to support the school in a very significant way.

Forthcoming Events

AGM October 10th. This is open to all members and gives the membership an opportunity to hear from the committee and to ask questions. We are transparent and accountable as all good organisations should be.

Combined School And OLA Event

We think that this will begin at around 1pm. Essentially, it will be a Hog Roast with salad. Drinks can be purchased and particular diets can be catered for-if we know about them. There will be music played by pupils throughout and we will be joined by a number of staff. Art work will be

on display and children's work can be seen in classrooms off the Hall. Astonishingly, we are only charging £5 per head, although some people have made generous donations. The event is open to absolutely anyone with an interest in the school. Guests, partners and children are welcome plus any former Green Goddesses.... Doors open 11 am.

Sportsman's Lunch Congham Hall November 11th

This event, by invitation only, is open to distinguished sportsmen who went to KES. Like all OLA events it raises funds for us. It has been going for a number of years now and, speaking personally, it's always very enjoyable

Spring Lunch Knight's Hill March 13th

Very similar cost and menu to last year's event which I can also say was very enjoyable. You have a little time to think about this one.

Bookings for the Spring Lunch are done through Peter Riches, but any applications sent to me will be forwarded. Anyone coming to the Hog Roast must apply by October 1st. Please do.



Reports of Events

The committee has met regularly to consider events and contributions to the school.

The OLA have had no events since the Spring Lunch. We would of course appreciate suggestions from members and also offers to organise events. First and foremost, we want to raise funds to support the school. Without these events we rely entirely on memberships and donations and that ,inevitably, limits what we are able to do. We are grateful that the school

puts on so many events where former pupils are always made to feel very welcome. A particular favourite of mine was the Art Exhibition which showed a lot of talent in the school. It also showed how committed the staff are, being prepared to give up precious time to engage with the public. Another sign of a very good school.

Correspondence and Articles

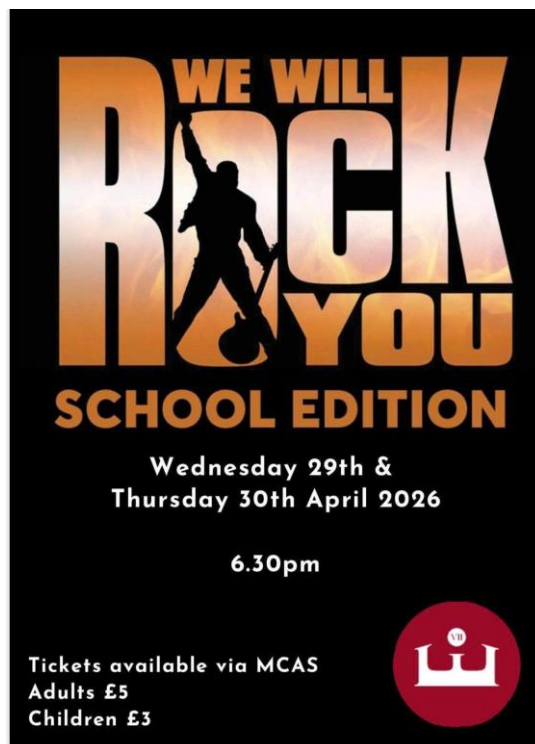
June 1967

Dear Maisy,

Hope you are well.

You came into my thoughts, so here is a nice long letter to bring you up to date with my mad, complicated world.

I don't know where to begin really. Since deciding to leave Norfolk to work in London, the last two months have been something of a rollercoaster. The journey from Kings Lynn was uneventful, apart from bumping into Parky, an old school mate. Well, perhaps not a mate, more of an acquaintance, although we did share a tent on a school trip. It



was a disaster. It would be unwise to write down what happened that night, but you can remind me to tell you all about it when we next meet.

Greeting us on the platform at Liverpool Street was a gang of Arsenal supporters who mistook me for a Watford fan simply because of my Rupert Bear scarf. They jostled me and pulled at my rucksack. Why are they so worried about stuff like that? I admit I was shaken and deliberately walked in the wrong direction to avoid them. The tube to Swiss Cottage involved changing twice and cost 1s.6d. When it finally arrived, I went to the Finchley Road exit where Dick said he would meet me. Do you remember Dick? The Scottish lad who worked at the Westminster Bank. His mum lived in North Wooton. Anyway, we met outside the newsagent and walked up to his digs about half a mile away. Dick has changed quite a lot. From being that beanpole with floppy blond hair, he is a now all grown up, sporting a pencil thin

moustache. He recently started working at the Home Office in Whitehall. He made me laugh when he said he was training to be a spy.

The plan to rent an empty room in his house had changed because the bloke had not moved out completely and it looked as if he might be staying. Dick offered to share his room with me temporarily, providing I slept on the floor, of course. This lasted until last

week. It helped us both because we divided the rent, but we had to cover our tracks when Mrs Meyer, the landlady, came collecting. She is known as 'The Warder' because of the bunch of keys strapped to her belt. I don't believe the rumour that she once supervised a concentration camp. The missing bloke never did come back so I moved in. It is quite a good-sized room with a bay window on the second floor facing the road. Some of his stuff was left behind. The only thing I haven't thrown out is his folder full of important looking papers. That can stay under the bed.

Dick has been fantastic. He treats me like a younger brother. I worry that he drinks so much. I can't hold more than two pints before I'm wobbly but old Dick is four or five ahead of me. Every day he goes out to work all spruced up in his three-piece suit and starched shirt. You wouldn't think it possible, the way he lives. Here is a photo of us trying to look moody. Look at my faux leather waistcoat! The other guy on the right at the back is Bert. His room is above mine, so I can hear him walking about and sometimes guests stay talking into the wee small hours. Unlike most of the others, his door is always locked and out of bounds. He is a bit of a mystery, and I have yet to make up my mind about him.

We only have one bathroom and a small kitchen to share between all the occupants. The kitchen is filled with stinking half-empty bottles of milk. I won't mention the bathroom. Disgusting. Once a week I go to the posh new swimming baths near the library but mostly I use the gas geyser and hand basin in my room.

It didn't take long to land a job as an assistant in a big electrical shop in Archway. My plan was to get any work then see what is available. The paper is full of small ads and lots of choice. London is expensive and my savings were going down very quickly. I had only been working with them for two weeks when the area supervisor, Charlie, asked me to transfer to a smaller branch in Kilburn as emergency cover. It's only just down the

way from my bedsit and I get some extra pay, bringing me up to £12 10s.6d a week. Pretty good for 1967, eh? My ambition is to break the £1000 a year barrier before I'm 20. It gets better than that! The shop only offers TV rental and repairs. The installations and maintenance are done by the branch engineer who runs around all day in a little company van. My place is in the shop, seeing the customers and taking the rentals. Kelvin, the engineer, is a one of a kind. The customers love him because he is a typical laid-back



Irish man with a wicked sense of humour. But straight away I could see that he had his own agenda. One day he failed to sign in. Within hours, Charlie, then the Police, arrived and took over the place. It seems that he and the old manager (the one off sick) were defrauding the business. Kelvin had phoned Head Office then disappeared back to Cork, leaving his keys on the front wheel outside his flat in Maida Vale. This all worked

in my favour as they handed over the van and made me the official manager while sorting out the mess. Charlie said that it didn't matter how well the shop did until the investigation was over.

When the Police had finished and when I was on my own again, I had a visit. Three tough looking blokes, strangely all wearing identical black knitted woollen gloves, burst in demanding to see Kelvin. They searched the backroom. I smiled when the one of them very politely apologised for breaking my teacup in his haste. Haven't seen them since.

Enough of that. My social life has improved since Dick introduced me a beautiful girl called Nancy who has the most amazing light blue eyes and long silky black hair. She is a journalist with a North London newspaper doing theatre reviews and obituaries. Her job comes with invitations to everything, including the funerals! Apart from her being a bit of a stunner, I like the idea of free nights out on the Town and have already fallen in love with that hypnotic gaze.

There are lots of parties in my terrace. Mostly hippies. Next door is full of them. They sit in huge circles in Regents Park waving flowers and chanting 'OM' for hours on end. What is that all about? I do understand because I cannot afford to be a Mod. You can be a hippy simply by wearing old clothes and sandals.

Tonight, I am going to The Galtymore Dance Hall in Cricklewood with Liam and Finn, the Killarney twins from the ground floor flat. They are promising me a good time.

Will write again soon,

Mike Boagey School House 1959-67

I can now explain that this letter, the first of a series is part fiction, part recollection, based on experiences in London in 1967. Mike is a fine writer, and I look forward to the rest of the series. Andrew

~~~~~

## **Pictures And Pages**

The endless tide of impressions  
Without shape or definition  
Crowd my memories still  
Pictures of too many times  
Alone  
Where it was always evening  
And never quite home.

I always wanted to go back  
And discover  
What it was I was always looking for  
Little knowing that  
Every step along the way  
Was never a search

But a settling of feelings  
Which were always mine.

The book was always  
Writing itself  
As the fires of uncertainty  
Became my voice  
Steady, unhindered and  
Unafraid.  
You opened my eyes  
And helped me to see  
That I was always myself  
And that it was always enough.

Andrew Stephen



~~~~~

Hi Andrew,

Came across a couple of photos which may be of interest and which appeared in the Lynn News. In the sports day snap L – R me, Patrick Burke, ?, ? (you maybe), Ian Watkins, Martin Flint and Brian Perry. The other photo is of an improv event during the three day Rag Week which I think was an idea from Andy Steele.

I have recently met up with Mike Harcourt and Richard Ilett. Richard recited some of his lines from a House Play that I had written. He deserves a medal.

Hope you are well,

Bob Hannam Lancaster 64-71

I bet these pictures stir some memories and interesting theories. Andrew



~~~~~

A Letter Of Thanks From A Pupil

Good morning,

I would like to dearly thank you for the donation for my We Are World Challenge Morocco trip. I am a student that goes to KES sixth form and formally a student at KLA and looking to

go further my education by going to university. I am looking to get so much out of this trip, I am looking to push myself out of my comfort zone since it's my first time abroad, take in the amazing views of Morocco through the mountains and gain the experience of a different culture to the English culture. Through this trip this will help me bolster my CV for university and any future jobs with the initiative during the trip being a very helpful experience.

Yours sincerely,  
Braydon Griggs

Two staff spoke to me about Braydon and the effect this trip had on his confidence and motivation. We were so pleased to support him financially and feel strongly that no pupil's education should be reduced by difficult financial circumstances. It's why we try to raise awareness and money and why we support the school as much as our means will allow. Andrew

## Memories

Dear Andrew,  
If you are short of space, you may want to use this letter. I think that teaching at KES during my time and I am sure for a few years afterwards was very much a matter of the teacher speaking and the pupils listening. This was great for the very bright boys who outshone those such as myself who never seemed to catch up.  
Best wishes  
Ray



## A SURVIVOR'S TALE

I always enjoy reading and sometimes rereading the OLD LENNENSIAN. The Spring edition was especially good. I envied your experiences detailed in your opening remarks where you speak highly of some of the KES masters who had influenced your life. Your exaltations provoked some thoughts from this very Old Lennensian [1950-58]. The main thought was that I cannot recall any of the masters other than Basher Beaumont [French], Lofty Williams [French] and Dave Perry [PE] taking any interest in my progress as an individual until I reached the Vth form, the year in which we sat our GCE examinations.

In September 1950 I was just 11 years old when I stepped off the 35 bus that brought me and about 30 or so other boys, including the now Venerable David Fleming, from Hunstanton and other villages along the way to Gaywood. I walked into the imposing building where I followed the herd and sat on the floor at the back of the hall for Assembly. I was allocated to form 1A and directed to a classroom where I realised that I did not know anyone. The other boy from Hunstanton who had passed the Scholarship Examination in 1950 had been sent to 1B. Nevertheless, there was a friendly buzz as many of the other boys came from Kings Lynn schools or lived nearby and obviously knew one another.

I was quite keen to learn to play football properly even though the only sport I excelled at was swimming. With little discussion our form master allocated us to various year football and later cricket teams. I later realised that the St



James's boys were in the first team, the other King's Lynn boys and boarders were in the second team whilst I ended up with a few other odds and sods whose names came at the end of the alphabet in the third team, known as the 'muck-ups' where I was doomed to be for the next four years of games afternoons. We stood around on the cold south field trying to kick a ball about with no coaching and little supervision. It is no credit to myself that I accepted

this arrangement which lasted until the Vth form when hockey and cross country running became Winter games and I played House Football on a Tuesday afternoon. I enjoyed dashing around the countryside and chasing a small ball on the sports field. By this time, I had proved my worth to Thoresby house and to the school as a swimmer. In fact, I was one of the first boys to be awarded school swimming colours, the late Bill Bray was the other awardee.

I coped poorly with most classroom subjects especially mathematics and gradually sunk to the bottom of the form order of merit. I was just thick. I hope nowadays a form master would have noticed my lack of progress and

have offered some help or even counselling. My father noticed my lack of progress and comments such as 'could do better' on my end of term reports. Rather than offer to help academically his reaction was just to lash out at me in a drunken rage. Life at home was not good and there was no way that masters based in King's Lynn would have had any idea of the home life of a boy living in Hunstanton and its influence on his educational progress.

I guess I started to take more interest in lessons when I realised that the GCEs were at the end of the next year, 1955. This was helped by an influx of young masters who were often lively in their teaching methods and they knew the names of all the boys in their classes. Some of these men had taken on a teaching role after university in lieu of National Service and others such as Alan Trist who had completed his National Service and became a Combined Cadet Force Officer. I met him by chance in later life in a military environment when he told me that the headmaster had discouraged his teaching staff from 'fraternising' with their pupils.



Much to my surprise I passed 6 GCEs, not mathematics, and was accepted for a place in the Science VIth form. There was no advice as to a choice between Arts or Sciences. I was torn between Biology and French and now realise that I had made the correct choice. Wow, what a change, the masters knew our names and some even asked where we lived. I was able to play house football and hockey on Tuesday afternoons. Remember in those days we had Tuesday afternoon off but had to attend school on a Saturday morning. In the Summer term I swam. I never had any interest in cricket.

In the January of that year my father died intestate and without any nearby family other than my mother I had to take a couple of weeks off to sort out his affairs. Sadly, my grandfather died a year later. I only needed a week off then as I knew the drill. The only recognition I had of these two deaths from the school was a comment from the headmaster that I seemed to be making a habit of losing relatives. So much for bereavement counselling.

I am sure that these early days at KES had a positive influence on my life. I am pleased to say that when I started work I took a discreet interest in the background of my fellow workers together with an awareness of the need for two-way communication and teamwork with special attention to listening skills. However, listening is not quite so easy these days but it improves when I remember to switch on my hearing aids!

Despite my tale of woe I survived, had three successful careers and did not regard my life at KES as anything but the norm.

Ray Woodcock Thoresby House 1950-58

I love reading accounts like this. We can all relate to the experiences of others. I am delighted that Ray was prepared to share his. Andrew

~~~~~

Picture Perfect

Floating about like a bottle top
on a sea of real-time nostalgia
is way outta line
when considering
it brings
a vanity project to fruition.
But simple tastes are what help
us run our race,
and to feature
in strangers' pics
feels opportunistic
passive-aggressively antagonistic
or perhaps simply akin to a pebble on a beach,
out of sight,
no plan to hide,
yearning to belong
and to be cleansed by the tide.

So, pensive,
I wait to make my move -
in Mablethorpe
on the stone steps of a moth-eaten pub,
while the world drags by,
a well-oiled party of four
click a catalogue of memories.
Their cameras don't lie.
And as they serve up selfies,
blow by blow,
I duly emerge
from the crowd's ebb and flow -
a background cameo

a subtle intrusion
a personal infusion -
a secret strut near 'hook a duck' stalls
the solitary stealth-like
pursuit of 'Two Penny Falls' -
that perfect alibi,
before the beach calls.

An extended family of red raw rivals
celebrates endless possibilities,
in a week's broiling heat on Crete,
clutching ceramic turtles and
fish-themed key rings
to their hearts,
flip flops on their feet -
a holiday
whose captured panoramic scenes
'cannot be beat'.
I amble timely into foreground view,
quite inconspicuous
anonymously new.
As I gaze across sea,
back turned to the throng,
turquoise glass
infinity and beyond -
then in Madeira, I'm even nearer
to perfection: taking a stroll,
moving around,
the personification of lost and found,
as groups of relations unite across nations,
and gather at the museum of CR7.
Strategy dictates:
"Give 'em the eyes", peripheral vision,
a furtive glance at a curator's precision,
each imperious king
viewing life through the prism
of an iphone lens...
We subjects are not friends



but remain forever linked,
bound,
trapped together in frames
just gathering dust
next to wilting flowers
and address books
(missing a pen),
upon eclectic sets of sideboards

till the end.

Ian Corns

'To a Nightingale' - a 'Romantic' poem by Charlotte Turner Smith

Who has the better existence – the bird or the narrator?

I think that the writer, Charlotte Smith, is envious of the nightingale as the bird can fly wherever it wants, while the narrator/poet is denied freedom in debtors' prison. The bird, though, is a 'songstress sad' and therefore I think their levels of misery are both the same. They are trapped in similar mindsets. The bird may not physically be in a cage, but it is struggling to find true happiness. My favourite quotes from the sonnet are: 'martyr of disastrous love', 'poor melancholy bird' and 'pale sorrow's victims were thou once among.' I think these extracts of language show why the bird might feel like this, as if it might have been taken over by misfortune. I think, when you feel imprisoned, you feel like everything just shuts down. They are both victims of society. Maybe the bird is defenceless within the hierarchy of cats and bigger birds, while ladies in the 18th and 19th centuries were expected to stay at home with their children, and they weren't allowed to vote because society was sexist. The nightingale also probably has its environment threatened by industrialisation. According to Charlotte Turner Smith, they are both suffering. She is in prison due to debt. The bird is probably a reflection of her (zoomorphic).

Ebony Thrower – Year 8, KES 2025-26



'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' by William Wordsworth

How does the poet, William Wordsworth, feel while observing his surroundings?

The poem begins with Wordsworth comparing himself to a cloud which roams the sky. A cloud is light and not heavy, so it implies that he has no stress and is calm. We can look at the poem and see that Wordsworth focuses on nature as a form of relaxation, fulfilment and happiness. Reading it out loud in my head tells me there is a difference between natural resources and man-made things: 'For oft, when on my couch I lie' his mind drifts to the 'golden daffodils'. It is a cure for when he feels empty or stressed, something which could be increasingly brought on by the Industrial Revolution and its destruction of nature. My opinion is that Wordsworth is suspicious of unnatural things, e.g. the development of factories and pollution.

'To Autumn' by John Keats

What does the writer do to show that 'To Autumn' is a Romantic poem?

The poet treats Autumn as if it is a person and that the writer is constructing a letter to that season. In the first stanza, we are told that Autumn has nearly gone and, with the quote: 'season of mists and mellow fruitfulness', we sense a calm and chilled out atmosphere because of the word 'mellow'. But maybe we can sense that 'Autumn' is the start of a phase of death, where nature starts to become gloomy. The leaves start to turn orange ready to fall. John Keats writes: 'Close bosom friend of the maturing sun.' The phrase 'maturing sun' means it's getting old and eventually winter will arrive. I can sense that all the flowers were photosynthesising, but now they are becoming dormant, ahead of coming out again in the springtime. The trees are becoming stick figures with no colour on them, and birds have just finished collecting berries for their children and themselves. This, if you look into it with complete depth, is what this poem is about.

The quote that makes the reader link the back end of summer with autumn is: 'To swell the gourd and plump the hazel shells.' It implies the busy acts of birds and animals eating in the natural world, while there is still plenty in supply.

Before, I thought 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' was the more impactful Romantic poem, but now I think 'To Autumn' has a sadder side to it because everything seems like summer has continued, but there is a sense of all of this just passing through. It's like the writer is missing the joys of Spring: 'Where are the songs of Spring – Ay where are they?' The new beginnings have gone. Winter is on its way.

Both of the above two responses by Jasmine Skye Castellari - Year 8, KES 2025-26



Impressions of Victorian England

My understanding of Victorian times (1837-1901) is that life was unfair. I personally would not want to live back then, especially not in a Workhouse. In my opinion, they sounded like hell because firstly you got separated from your family and you would then have to smash rocks (to be put down for roads) or you would have to pick rope apart (for the waterproofing of boats). This would occur probably until you died - all during the Industrial Revolution.

I can't imagine having to be an orphan in the workhouse. I don't find it fair, even these days, where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. It would have been horrific due to sharing huge rooms with many others packed in. People would get lice and infections. It would smell very bad in there. I even think, if someone died, the others would be wondering if it meant more food for the rest of them. In normal, everyday life, they would barely be fed – I find this to be really disgusting, particularly because those in charge were corrupt and often spent the money on themselves. I also realised that you would most likely die in the workhouse. I think most didn't make it out alive.

Impressions of Mrs Sowerberry ('Oliver Twist' by Charles Dickens)

My opinion is that Mrs Sowerberry is a really cruel and horrible character. She doesn't want Oliver Twist to be brought home and added to her staff as she thinks he will cost too much money to keep, which will outweigh his usefulness. She refers to him as 'a little bag o' bones', basically calling him a skeleton that's alive. She therefore also means he's the walking dead. In reality, he's just a poor, starved kid. She's furthermore inhumane. Instead

of feeding him normal human food, she gives him dog food which even the dog doesn't want.

Oliver was made to sleep amongst the coffins in the undertaker's shop, suggesting his ongoing life is deathly. This is all continued from his time in the workhouse. There, no one really liked him. He had been born outside of marriage and his mum died during the process of giving birth after she'd desperately entered the workhouse premises. He was named 'Oliver Twist' perhaps since they thought he was destined to hang, where the rope would 'twist' - they sent him away, actually paying Mr Sowerberry £5 to pick him up. Noah Claypole's poor treatment of him at the Undertaker's shows he's never free of bullying as he calls Oliver, 'Work'us', reminding him of his low status.

The above two responses from Anastasija Kucinska – Year 8, KES 2025-26



Insights via Reading for Pleasure

'Noughts and Crosses', a novel by Malorie Blackman

The reader learns that the History teacher, Mr Jason, treats Callum very unfairly at Heathcroft High School and sends him out of class. We are told he's half Nought and half Cross, and that he therefore cares for the well-being of Callum. My opinion is that the book would have been much better if Mr Jason had been sat in a chair, in the final part of the novel, so the only thing visible was the back of his head, and then slowly he turned around and said, 'Hello Callum.' If he had emerged like this as the leader of the Militia, that would have been a great twist to the structure of the story along with the suspense being maximised. It would have joined the beginning with the end.

Sephy and Callum's 'friendship' is harmed by the fact that they are from opposite sides of society and they therefore cannot be seen together, especially because both sets of parents have history and cannot stand each other. If they get seen together, there are terrible consequences and it's particularly bad for Callum, who has earned a scholarship to be at Heathcroft School. I think their perseverance is based on the big idea that maybe they'll get through it together and perhaps there is always hope. The book, though, is based on racism, but instead of society being racist towards black people, it is the opposite way round. It is the white people, in this novel, who are treated terribly by the ruling class. We can see this through white students, like Callum, trying to get to school for their first day, and all the parents and kids refusing to let them in. They protest against white pupils, even though they easily passed the entrance exam. I think the waves that come from this inequality are terrifying. Lynette walks in front of a bus and kills herself. Her 'blacker' (white) parents were arguing all the time. I think she had just had enough of living in a society which holds such pressure, where her family is poverty-stricken.

The standout quote for me was said by Sephy when Callum was trying to attend school and get through the crowds. Sephy accuses her fellow privileged Crosses as being '...worse than animals – like blankers!' So, while telling everyone off for their racist protest, she shows that she's racist, herself, which hurts Callum badly.

Lucas Stevenson. Year 9 – KES 2025-26

I think that the two kids, Sephy and Callum, need to cut off contact with one another. I think Callum never seems to be able to blame himself for things that go wrong. As part of the underclass, he automatically sees everything as the Crosses' fault, and therefore seeks to cause tension with Sephy. This is a theme which appears to run right through his family.

The book is an emotional rollercoaster. There are moments where you feel happy for the characters, like when Callum and Sephy first kissed, but when Jude and Callum's dad both join the Liberation Militia (terrorist organisation), you feel bad because the author makes it seem like it was all going to end up horribly for those around them. The person it mostly affected was the mother of the family because slowly everyone left her life. The dad, her husband, was shot when attempting to escape from prison, after having admitted to a crime that his son, Jude (who goes on the run), had committed. Then, he is almost hung for

it, but is reprieved at the last second, just for him to die scaling the jail's boundary. Added to this, Lynette, their daughter, has died in a bus accident which was actually suicide.

The most interesting aspect, for me, was the blind faith that Sephy always had in Callum. He had lured her to their secret place on their beloved beach and then had her kidnapped by the Militia. This should have ended their friendship, especially when the terrorists referred to her as 'a bitch' with such resentment in their voices. To openly state that she still had faith in Callum was either her lying through her teeth to survive, or the idea is that love is permanent and immovable.

Kernius Kadys, Year 9 – KES 2025-26



The book shows a world that is affected by extreme racism, where Callum and Sephy are best friends but they can't be together due to deep-seated divisions in society. Sephy was beaten up by 'her own kind' for sitting with 'Blankers' at lunchtime, and on a train Callum, a Nought/Blanker, is harassed by officers because he is sitting in First Class with a Cross (Sephy). The policemen were reacting to the fact that this was not normal. Sephy tries to protect him, though he seems more angry than grateful, and she certainly has her own problems in life such as realising that her father has a son somewhere, from a relationship he'd had before marriage. There is also the increasing alcoholism of her mother, who had refused to allow Sephy's half-brother into the family.

In my view, the most important quotes from the story are: 'How dare you spread these



pathetic lies about Nought scientists and inventors.' This is said to Callum by the History teacher, Mr Jason. We sense that reality has become centred on falseness, where the rulers prejudice white people as being unintelligent. Mr Jason is representing history from the sole perspective of Crosses by erasing Noughts. This is backed up by the chant, 'No Blankers in our school. No Blankers in our school.' Society forms its power through things such as education, which is not open to or designed for Noughts' benefit. It is how the Crosses stay in charge.

Vinayak

Rajan, Year 9 – KES 2025-26

John Smallwood was always telling me off for not including enough about the present school in the newsletter. He would have been delighted to read work by pupils. As am I.
Andrew

Andrew

You might like to hear that I thought the piece by Peter Bowman made a good impression on me and that the Doctrina magazine was well put together. There are always some inaccuracies inevitably but the use of 'Alan' in my father's name is always a sign that the writer never addressed him or knew him as such!

Good to see that the English department is well led and a credit to the school. Below attached is my note to Peter Bowman with a teaser as a PS.

Up School!

John Sleigh School House 1959-65

Peter

Good to read your piece about Phoenix and thanks for some complimentary remarks. There could be the makings of a whole article about the Phoenix story - I still have copies of all the Union and Phoenix Times somewhere in the loft as well as the Crossbar cuttings that include mention of 'Speedy Bowman on the wing'! I'm not sure if you, as a budding journalist, had anything published in them but there were contributions from David Miller - a future KES educated published author.

Come on England! (and Chelsea)

John

PS I wonder if anyone realises it is 50 years since AHS retired after 25 years service?

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## **British Triathlon appoints Danny Kerry MBE as Performance Director**

PUBLISHED: 24TH JUNE 2026

### **British Triathlon is pleased to confirm the appointment of Danny Kerry MBE as its new Performance Director**

Kerry brings extensive leadership experience from across five Olympic cycles and a proven track record in high-performance sport.

He will join the organisation in late summer from UK Sport, where he has been leading the development of a UK high-performance coaching support strategy across sport. Prior to this he was at England Hockey as Performance Director and Head Coach where he led the teams to multiple medal winning performances and has provided consultancy services to a wide range of national sporting bodies and commercial organisations across leadership, performance planning and high-performance cultures.

In his new role, Kerry will lead British Triathlon's performance strategy across its Olympic and Paralympic World Class Programmes as well as an integrated pathway programme across the Home Nations, with a focus on sustaining world-leading standards while strengthening medal potential for LA 2028, Brisbane 2032 and future cycles.

Kerry said: "I am hugely excited by the opportunity to join British Triathlon and its athletes and staff in their endeavours. British Triathlon is a world leader, and the



challenge now is to sustain that incredible standard while continuing to evolve. This is a programme with outstanding athletes, coaches and support teams, and I recognise the responsibility that comes with helping them thrive on the world stage.

"My focus will be on continuing to create clarity, alignment and responsibility across the performance system, supporting athletes and coaches to deliver when it matters most, and building the depth required to keep British Triathlon competitive across multiple cycles."

Kerry's recent work has included strategic leadership across the UK high-performance system in relation to coach support and

development, as well as consultancy and advisory roles across high-performance sport, leadership development and senior business teams.

Kerry will be taking over from [Mike Cavendish](#) who, over his eight-year tenure, has led multiple successful performances across Olympic and Paralympic programmes, with medal winning performances at Tokyo and Paris as well as World Triathlon events.

Ruth Daniels, CEO of British Triathlon, said: "We are delighted with Danny's appointment. He brings outstanding experience of leading people, programmes and systems at the highest level of sport and a winning mindset with strong values and integrity. His appointment strengthens both our performance and executive leadership as we look towards LA 2028 and beyond.

"I'd also like to thank our out-going Performance Director, Mike Cavendish, who has built a brilliant programme, for Danny to now take forward, and we wish him every success in his new role at UKSI."

Debbie Clarke, Chair of British Triathlon, added: "British Triathlon's strategic focus is to continue to develop and support world-class athletes through a world-class performance programme, and Danny's appointment is an important step in continuing to deliver that strategy. His experience in building high-performing teams and aligning complex systems will help ensure our athletes have the environment, support and clarity they need to succeed on the global stage."

.....

Great news about Danny Kerry, another OL to be extremely proud of.  
Andrew

### Contrasting Lives

Recently I was shown a photograph taken with a drone showing a cricket ground in Australia's Mallee (almost desert country) which showed cricketers playing in white on a cricket oval, that stood out from the dead brown of the flat land around it. It prompted me to think of the differences between life in a green and pleasant land and a place of droughts and flooding rains so I thought you might consider my thoughts on the difference between cricket in the two countries:

### CRICKET: CHALK AND CHEESE

Let me take you on a journey - back to the summer of '61.

We are walking down the slope from the Boarding house to the cricket pavilion, with the headmaster's garden on our right, then his fruit trees and the practice nets., but our attention is on the cricket pitch. There's steam coming off the recently rolled strip that we are about to play on. The sun is out after heavy rain overnight.

I can't remember who the first eleven were playing, but it was going to be a memorable day. KES is bowling first and Peter Sharpe is finding the conditions particularly difficult - the ball is bouncing slowly after taking a divot from the pitch . He bowls just two overs before I'm brought on to replace him. Normally left arm with little spin, my first ball which is in line with the stumps suddenly finishes up in the hands of second slip. It must have hit one of those divots that Peter had dug up. Then it was a procession of batters who let me finish with 7-28.

I'm not sure if this was my best result with the ball, but I can remember the headmaster, Mr Sleigh coming up as I walked back from the pavilion, tugging my jumper down and saying "well done Gibson", Probably the only time he'd praised me in the six years in the Boarding House. Maybe cricket was the only thing that kept me at the school because he certainly didn't enjoy my scholastic abilities or my behaviour.

But my memory will always be on that steaming pitch. To quote some more distinguished bowlers, I wish I could have rolled it up and used it whenever the captain decided I should have a bowl.

Now let the journey take you 12,000 miles to a stinking hot day in Melbourne before those in charge of suburban grounds watered the grass, apart from the pitch area.

It's 40 degrees and I'm fielding down at fine leg with ice blocks in one of those silly towelling hats. The only way to stop a ball coming towards you is to get your body behind it and expect it to jump up and let it hit you. As the captain said, it's for the team.

After four hours being baked, it's my turn to try those finger spinning deliveries. The batters must have thought all his Christmases had come at once. Perhaps I was allowed a couple of overs. Remember these are the conditions that Shane Warne developed his bowling skills, firing his deliveries out of the back of his hand, giving him the vicious spin that made him probably the best .

After a couple of fruitless seasons, country Victoria was calling and I moved out from the big smoke and joined a team that was struggling. My boss told me to stay away from the town team and join one that took in a farming community. He said you get a much better afternoon tea and a way to become a valuable team member. The first thing they said was they needed a fast bowler. So yes I said, I can bowl fast. The wicket keeper/captain was 60 and also opened the batting. I thought they were all likely to be hopeless. However, I'd not taken account of the pride they took in their slowly dying farming community. The sons had moved away to get jobs, but returned at weekends to make sure their little township that's held together by its cricket, football and netball teams didn't die.

This is where the difference between English and Australian lower grade cricket can be seen. This is where many Australian cricketers hone their skills and their aggression. Because these small townships are so dear to generations of farmers, they compete against nearby townships to make sure their team is better. There's spite and anger in these games because reputations can be made or broken. Fast bowling is a fool's game in some pretty unpleasant conditions, so I thought maybe I could turn back to spin.



Another move, this time to northern South Australia where the wheat farmers were being bought out by conglomerates. This put tremendous pressure on communities, but added to their win at all costs to protect their history. The team I chose was struggling but afternoon tea was brilliant, scones, home made cream and jam.

Then my day in the sun came against the big town team on the Memorial oval, all beautifully watered. We made 331, but while fielding at fine leg I misjudged a skyer and it hit me on the nose. The farmers surrounded me, pushing and shoving it before sending me off to the hospital. On my return, the other side had just made 300 with only three wickets down. The captain turned to me and said he'd tried everything so why not me. The batter looked at me, then the score and thought he could win the match in my first over. He smashed the ball high to the midwicket boundary, but he failed to see our secret weapon - a young farmer with hands like meat plates who took a running catch. The next man in tried to do the same and fell to the same trick. Two wickets in an over,. I waited out the next over as the opponents moved closer to victory. Back to me and the the man with the meat plate hands took another cracker catch. Suddenly the new batsman thought I was bowling hand grenades. He played for the spin which wasn't there, and the next batsman did the same. Unfortunately the home team struggled over the line, but I cleaned up the tail and finished with 7-28.

However, this wasn't a pitch I would roll up. It was just good luck and a roaming farmer who didn't stay where his captain told him to field.

My experiences in Australia just showed me the differences in cricket in the two countries and how the struggles in the Australian bush bring out the aggressive and competitive nature and how country men and women return to their small and dying communities to fight against what is eventually going to happen. The centre of these townships is always the local sports ground with an oval for cricket and football and netball courts where locals meet to share friendships and some relief from their hardships.

It also shows the difference with what was a gentleman's game in England in the early sixties to the aggressive Australians. I recall the Manchester Ashes test of 1961, just after the Grammar School's steaming wicket. The difference was obvious from the start as Richie Benaud walked out with Peter May to toss. Benaud was wearing blue suede shoes and open neck, May, the amateur captain, looking very formal in a blazer and tie. Cricket has changed since then but remember it was Benaud and his struggles on Australian wickets that gave him the last laugh when it looked like all was lost.

#### FOOT NOTE

I'm in my eighties now and still support England in tests, despite 64 of those years spent in Australia, mostly in Television newsrooms where I learnt quickly to keep a gentlemanly low profile when cricket is mentioned. It's all jolly good shot, well played.

John Gibson School House 1955-61





## **A Walk With The Ancients Or, A Guide To The Peddars Way**

Here the track seems always  
To be uphill  
Even when you can smell the coast  
And the scattered tumuli  
Stand out for miles  
Against the unrelenting green flatness  
Where nowhere seems to be far away  
But always seems to back away  
Laughing at our complacency  
And fooling the determined walkers  
Who are eroding the silence  
If only a moment  
Like the Romans did  
And many a hardy soul  
Before then.

Sometimes raucous gulls and cackling Rooks  
Challenge the silent air  
And claim all we can see  
As their own  
While, all about us,  
The years lie in pieces  
But unforgotten  
As the plough pulls the sullen earth

Apart  
Ready to serve our needs  
And, sometimes, to give up its treasures  
Which make new stories  
And show how little we know.

I love the moment of arrival  
At a beach where the tide is always out  
And the sea a mere hint  
In the way of Lincolnshire.  
Our conversations have ended  
Our minds are calm  
Cured by the call of the sea  
And the sigh of many trees

Later I will still see  
The church towers  
Seeming to rise slowly  
From the Barley fields  
And see the faces of those  
Who always walk with me.  
When we know ourselves  
We are always at home  
And time is just a distraction.

Andrew Stephen

I sent this to Ian the other day. He needs a constant stream of new stuff to read.  
You may have guessed that it refers to Syd Barrett who I was talking about with his sister  
Rosemary recently - she thought the younger versions of ourselves would have made  
friends had we met:

### **If Only I Had Known Syd**

by Mike Boagey

There was always a chance of us meeting,  
In London. In the Sixties.  
A fleeting chance.  
We could easily have been friends.  
We both had our dreams.  
We all have a dream, but his were beyond my scene  
and mine would not have been  
of interest to Syd at the time.  
But I was moved, when,  
I saw him on the TV screen

With sad eyes and unkempt hair  
 'I'm looking for a friend' it screamed  
 Except I wasn't there.  
 To offer support  
 If only I had known Syd.  
 In London. All those years ago.

Mike Boagey



## Reflective Writing Resides at the Heart of Andrew's Art

*In the first instalment of a latest two-part collaboration, Ian Corns, Doctrina Digest Editor-in-Chief, sits down with ex-KES boarder, retired Head of English, poet, author, chair of the Old Lennensians and KES Trustees, Andrew Stephen, to discuss his second published poetry anthology, 'Under a Norfolk Sky' and his literary plans for the future.*



**Page turners:** Author, Andrew Stephen, with his recently released book of poetry, 'Under a Norfolk Sky' and his Cambridge United memoirs 'The Season That Nearly Was'

**ICS** Welcome, Andrew. It's always good to touch base with you. I was just looking again at the anthology, 'Under a Norfolk Sky' – every time I

read it, it just gets better. Do you think it evolves as a body of work?

**Andrew** Yes, I think it does. Sometimes when I read reviews – there are a few reviews on Amazon now – it kind of embarrasses me in a way, because people have responded to it at a much deeper level than I initially thought I was writing. I think it's fair to say that it's a book that I always wanted to produce. I wanted to make sense of the past - I wanted to make sense of the fact I love being in Norfolk and to give credit to where I've been influenced by people and events. It's really about finding out who you are, so I'm very happy with it and every now and again people write to me and say, 'In this, did you mean this/that?' and I look at them thinking, 'Well, I don't think I did at the time, but now you come to mention it...'

**ICS** That's how poetry breathes, though, isn't it? People see new things.

**Andrew** Yes, I remember meeting Adrian Henri once. I was asking him about some of the poems that he'd performed that night. I asked him if certain things within each work had specific meanings. He said, 'You can't separate out one particular meaning and say it's just *this*, and none of the other things.' A lot of good poetry, I think, emerges first of all through feeling, as an emotion, and what you try and do is 'cast around' a little bit and say it *could* equate to something quite specific. It can, as I've discovered, take up to sixty years to work out what something meant. I'm sure people tried to tell me that when I was fifteen or sixteen, but I didn't listen.

**ICS** Well, I think time means we mature and we see things in a different way. A lot of your poems have got the theme of peace running through them along with tranquillity. I think you come to an understanding that perhaps the formative years, for a lot of us, are full of angst and anxiety and they somehow lead us to where we need to be, like there's a 'big picture'.

**Andrew** Yes, I think so. What intrigues me is a lot of people my age and younger don't seem to have found it, or – at least – don't seem to value it. They're still just as jangled-up as they ever were and dissatisfied with things. One of the things I think I've discovered more and more over the last few years is, when you're getting on a bit, you don't have time to waste, so you don't waste your time worrying about things that you can't do anything about. It's worth spending a lot of time weighing up which things are blessings. You know that some of the people I talk about in the poems died young. So, part of what I'm saying is I'm very grateful that I didn't and very grateful that they were there when they were there. It's a sort of way of keeping them alive.

**ICS** Yes, it's about doing them justice and commemorating them.

**Andrew** I think so. And by acknowledging what they did for you, without knowing it at the time and without even intending it, they do something and impact the way you think about things.

**ICS** So, this was your English teacher?

**Andrew** Yes, very much my English teacher. Two or three members of staff. I think the PE teacher, Dave Perry, has to go down in history. He was a great warrior. If I had anything to do with it, he would. I think some people disapproved of him because he was rough at the edges. But I think if you've trudged thirty miles through the snow, having been shot down and attacked by armed Nazis, you're going to have a few rough edges. And he brought such a lot out of me. I mean I never had a particular ability in sport, but he told me I could run. I

wasn't so sure. He didn't bully me exactly, but he challenged me. It's one of the things that followed me into teaching really. If you're dealing with difficult kids, and you can challenge them and then allow them to achieve something, that's the best thing you can do.

**ICS** In terms of 'Under a Norfolk Sky', it begins with 'Echoes', something which was done structurally on purpose as it focuses immediately upon Alzheimer's, and clearly this 'echoes' throughout the body of work with a number of other poems returning to this theme. How is your mother at this moment in time?

**Andrew** She's struggling. I'd say she's in the last stages, very confused by things and she's started asking me who I am sometimes.

**ICS** Yes, I'm waiting for that with my mother, who has dementia.

**Andrew** It's difficult, but I think what was anger and incomprehension and rage in me – to begin with – has been replaced by pity now because I can see she has no choice in what she does. There are moments of coherence. There are moments when she smiles...

**ICS** She was dancing quite recently...

**Andrew** Yes, she was. Very recently. My brother and I, who visit her two days a week, started playing her music from the fifties. She sang along with it. I was amazed. She can't remember what she said to me twenty seconds before, but she can remember something from the fifties. So, the brain is a curious thing. I think the pathways in the different parts of the brain get some sort of interference, so you have a kind of picture of things, but you can't necessarily make any sense of it. What I do know is that when my brother and I are there, she feels safe. As long as you feel you're doing your best, it's OK. It's like recently when my brother, Richard, said to me 'I've only walked seven miles', I replied: 'Never say "only". If it's as much as you can do, that's good enough for anyone, particularly when (post-cancer) you can't walk properly.' And I think it's the same when trying to care for people with Alzheimer's. People will always tell you to try and get inside the head of someone who is suffering, or to accept their world. The trouble is we can't always understand.

**ICS** Yes, that's true. We can reach towards empathy, but we're not always walking in the same shoes.

**Andrew** No. We're not gods. We're human beings doing our best.

**ICS** Just looking at a few of these poems: 'Destiny Skulks in the Shadows'; I liked it when I first read it, but it has grown massively on me since. It's fabulous. It ends with 'I'm filled with the amnesia of complacency. Will I remember this pain/ and smile/ knowing that it was worth it?' Do you value every single experience that you've had – painful or otherwise?

**Andrew** That's a very good question. I've had my bad moments. I've had my bitter moments, and indeed moments of regret. I think, if I reach a conclusion at all, self-pity is a waste of time. Life, I think, is full of choices that you don't always know about - and, with a lot of things, you either go on or you don't. That's the choice and, once you've realised that, it's very helpful. I've learned from some of the best. Dave Perry made the choice to survive, my brother – Richard - chose to be positive, which is probably why he's still alive – so, I try to inhabit that world rather than one in which you can get overwhelmed, particularly if a lot of bad things happen to you all at once, or things happen to you which you can't understand. I think there's one thing that I do know for certain: there's no point in complaining that life is unfair, because it *is*. You don't get what you deserve. You don't

always get what you want. I've lost a lot of friends over the years who were marvellous human beings. And they were just unlucky, and that's just the way it is. What you can do, of course, is to live your life and be a credit to them. I wouldn't have said that twenty years ago, but I've gradually crept towards it.

**ICS** So, is that your version of dignity and self-respect?

**Andrew** Yes. I think, when all said and done, you've got to face yourself, haven't you? Some people have told me that I'm contemptuous of the opinions of others. That's not true. They're wrong (laughing). I have contempt for that opinion. No, in all seriousness, it doesn't show moral weakness to disagree with people. I think a lot depends on *how* you disagree.

**ICS** Is this why you always invite debate over your two newsletters and indeed on the terraces at Cambridge United?

**Andrew** Yes, I do, and sometimes people don't take it well. I think you can receive things on any level. I had an interesting experience in John Lewis the other day in Norwich, and I think this is kind of relevant to what we're saying. There was a lady patrolling up and down, looking in the cabinets at the cakes. She looked like she was never going to make up her mind, so I went straight up to the counter and placed my order. As I turned round, she came straight up to me and said, 'Don't you realise I was next in the queue? Don't you realise I was waiting to be served? Don't you realise it's offensive to push in?' And I said: 'No, I didn't realise any of those things, but I do realise you are very confrontational and unnecessarily aggressive.' The assistant at the cash till nearly fell off her chair. The lady didn't speak to me after that. It didn't lead to any further unpleasantness. I remained resolutely polite, although what I said was probably quite uncomfortable. I came across the same thing this morning when I tried to use my bus pass. The driver rolled his eyes at me and said, 'It's not half past nine.' I replied, 'I know that.' He said, 'You can't use your bus pass until half past nine.' I said, 'I did not know that. Well, I'll have to pay then.' He said, 'Yes, you'll have to pay.' So, I took a tenner out of my wallet and showed it to him. He tutted. In the end, he gave me change. I looked down at him and said, 'I really didn't mean to upset you.'

He said: 'That's alright. Glad to be of service.' Anyone less 'glad to be of service' I had never seen. You have to laugh sometimes.

**ICS** These are all anecdotes, aren't they? Something which runs the length and breadth of your poems. It's all anecdotal. It's what brings the work to life. Do you think that this is part of the charm of your most recent book – i.e. there is something in there for everyone?

**Andrew** I hope so. A couple of people have criticised some of my short stories and said they dwell too much on the 1970s. I've tried to tell them it's taken me this long to make sense of those years. I've got another one in my head, and I'm not quite sure how I'm going to go about it yet, but it turns out that my family, when they were living in Limassol with the RAF, resided next door to General Grivas – a dangerous Cypriot madman and terrorist. Well, I met him. I didn't know who it was, but I had several conversations with him. He was the gentlest, kindest, most encouraging man that you could imagine. He told me the places on the island that I could visit and where I could get on the bus. He was 'charm' itself. Not seemingly anti-British or anti-anything, in fact. I want to tell that story, but I want to tell it in a way that it's not me reminiscing again. I want to try and hold the secret right to

the end - so I'm working on that. I think if you don't use your own experiences, I'm not quite sure how it ends up. I admire people who can create an alternative reality through their art, but I'm much more interested in the world that we've got.

**ICS** Absolutely. I mean, just looking again at 'Destiny Skulks in the Shadows', this is priceless: 'She seethed forgetfulness/As I licked my wounds/In the dark liveliness of another pub.' So, this appeals to me automatically. It's what I know.

'I waded back into the unknown/Braying to my sneering friends,/Defiant, boastful,/And a little broken.' It's fantastic. Obviously, it's from yesteryear, but the experience resonates and remains in your veins, doesn't it?

**Andrew** Yes, it does. The pub, as it happens, was the White Horse in Gaywood, but it could be anywhere. I think we've all been savaged by relationships at times and thought 'It's not fair' and 'I'm too good for this', 'I thought everything was alright' and 'Life's not meant to make you feel this way' and, at the same time, you have to put on a brave face and appear nonchalant. I remember when I got ditched by the infamous Abigail, I dated about eight girls in the space of a fortnight, and that was my way of saying, 'I don't care', but of course I did. It's hard to express, but I think I got near to it with that poem.

**ICS** If we can just turn to 'Looking Back', a poem about running along the Norfolk coast which doubles as a metaphor for life, obviously there's a sense of nostalgia. Do you think about emotions and then convert them into metaphors, or do you think 'backwards' and say, 'Right, this is going to be my metaphor/big overarching idea and then find the finer details?

**Andrew** No, I never do it that way. It starts with the events and the feelings, and what I want to do with them. Sometimes the words come very quickly. I never really think consciously about the structure. It's only later when I come to look at it that I realise what I have done. It's been really useful when you've done an analysis where you look at the build-up of imagery and I think 'Yes, I did that', though I wasn't conscious of it at the time. I think it has to sound right. Sometimes, when I look at my initial book of poetry, first of all I can see that I was desperate to get it done, so it's a bit frantic in places and, secondly, because a lot of it is based on stuff I wrote when I was eighteen, I can see Hardy and Eliot in there, and I say to myself: 'You've ripped that off, haven't you?' But maybe that shows the value of a good education. Maybe it shows I was listening. I think, if you learn from life, that's stolen in itself. The second anthology, 'Under a Norfolk Sky' is less frantic, more thought through, more tranquil and more accurate. I tried to nail down just what it is I'm grateful for. I've said to friends of mine who are going through a really bad depression: 'This may seem a daft idea, but every morning when you get up, write down three things that you should be grateful for.' And they've been reluctant, but some of them have done it and it's worked. When I came here, to KES, as a student, I wasn't grateful for it. It was just where I went to school. There didn't seem to be anything special about it, and it was maybe forty years later when I realised that the building is actually terrific. As an eighteen-year-old, you don't really look at buildings. I think I spent a lot of my time wishing I'd been taught at the High School, where all the girls were. It would've made life much more interesting. It was only a two-mile walk, and I'd become very quick at walking. I think that created problems for me at the time because the ethos was, 'We're here to learn; we're not here to enjoy

ourselves – you can worry about girls later.’ I didn’t want to wait ‘til later. I wanted to find out about them now. I think that’s indirectly what got me kicked out of school.



***All smiles while putting in the miles:***  
*Andrew with his brother, Richard, during the Great Hike*

**ICS** Just tying in your previous reference to your brother, Richard, and the fact that you’re still writing poetry, I just wanted to congratulate you on your latest piece, ‘Sand Through My Fingers’, something which describes the recent Great Hike you

completed in aid of the cancer charity, Macmillan Support:

### **Sand Through My Fingers**

The slow and invisible decay  
Of beach battered boats  
And the lives we might have seen  
Or expected  
Seem perfect in this world  
Of wheeling gulls  
And crashing waves.  
Lumbering, heavy as the skyline  
I move like a rumour  
Towards a kind of destiny  
Or Fate, which seems shrouded  
In doubt or mist,  
Like a far-off shore  
Or a dream briefly glimpsed  
And whisked away  
In a flurry of longings.  
A fleeting voice  
Whispers my own dread  
Of little lives  
Not worth living  
And memories of joy  
Glimpsed briefly  
Like the moments fixed like pictures  
Where I connected with the moment.  
We cannot know what we want  
Or what we should seek  
But we know where we have been  
And why it mattered.



*Andrew Stephen*

**ICS cont.d** The ‘big picture’, which you build expertly in this piece of work through a featured array of natural vastness (along with ‘sand’ in the title, a symbol of time), is all about the stuff that awaits us - the destinations, the outcomes - and it's through a sense of reflection that we see the turning points. Awesome work. It's amongst your best pieces. Do you think your writing has evolved at all since the publication of ‘Under a Norfolk Sky’?

**Andrew** Yes, I think it has, though I can't perhaps explain how or why. I somehow thought, once I'd produced the book, that I was done with poetry. I felt I had said everything I wanted to say. I've written approximately seven more poems since. The curious thing about this latest piece is that I formulated it during the hike. It all came to me throughout the journey. It was the strangest thing. When I got back home, the thoughts turned into words and the words turned into lines. And, that evening, I wrote most of it down. During the eighteen miles of walking, I got in touch with my feelings and emotions such as celebrating my brother still being alive. I also thought about those who weren't here now but should have been. I think, unwittingly sometimes, I seek to bring people back to life within my poetry. The thing is, if they're alive in my head, then they somehow still exist.

**ICS** If we observe the poem, ‘Words’ (‘Under a Norfolk Sky’), it says: ‘We persuade ourselves that we have captured that shaft of sunlight’ and it ends with, ‘Perhaps longing is the only part that is real.’ Do you think that we kid ourselves sometimes about what is important?

**Andrew** Yes, I think the more we strive for things, the more unhappy we become. I often relate to the time when I did a lot of running. I associate it with a feeling of freedom, shaking off orthodoxy and going – within reason – in the direction I want to go. I often come across people who I think are a bit ‘OCD’, and I end up with the idea that maybe I'm an anarchist, at least mentally. I'm not so sure I am. I'm actually quite disciplined in my own way, but the moment you think you've captured something, you've lost it because real ‘Truth’ is elusive. You can't just pin it down. If you could, you wouldn't get people like Turner painting something which a sizeable section of the population might refer to as genius, while others simply say, ‘Well, it's just light isn't it? Tricks of light.’ There was once a copy of it on the wall outside your classroom and I was always looking at it, undecided as to whether or not it was any good.

Nowadays, I've been to see the original and I have no idea how a human has been able to produce something so good. I think worthwhile poetry is much the same.

**ICS** Are you intrigued by the vastness of nature and the surrounding world, and that maybe by comparison we are just grains of sand?

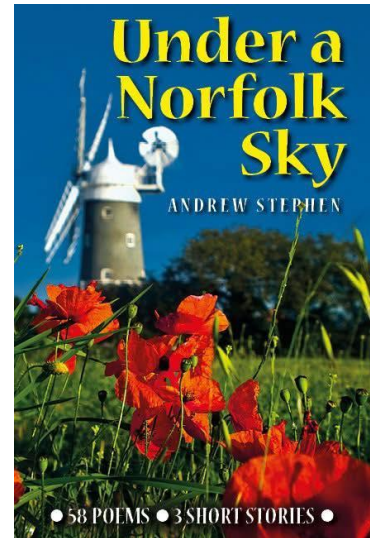
**Andrew** Yes, I think those exact thoughts came to me when I was a runner and when I first lived in Norfolk. I remember walking along a beach and the sky was black as a blizzard raged and waves smashed against the shore. I recall wondering, ‘How can anyone think they're important when you've got this?’

**ICS** Looking at the poem, ‘Shades of Knowing’, you mention the sea – something which features as a motif throughout a good number of your other poems. Would you say that the sea represents you? I mean the sea symbolises time and routine, while also being a metaphor for tempestuousness and wildness.

**Andrew** Yes, I think so. The sea is permanent. It's bigger and more significant than any of us, and one day – of course – we'll disappear under it. It also associates itself with my love of Norfolk, the county having been essentially rescued from the sea; it's been buried beneath it at times. The fact the sea is untameable, I like that. During the walk that we did – the mighty hike – the waves along the beach were absolutely raging. It was comforting really. My feet hurt, but what I could see was wonderful. I've never really thought of comparing myself to the sea, but I can sense what you mean. There are aspects that are comparable and which appeal to me, I think.

**ICS** Poets and writers try to frame things in words, don't they? In 'Shades of Knowing', there's an ongoing sense of futility. It's as if we can't do justice to the big ideas of the world and nature through just words.

**Andrew** I think that's right. Some things are too big. We like to kid ourselves that, if we are well-educated or wordy, or intellectual, that we have a grasp of things. But this is all very superficial. There are so many things we don't know and can't know. Often, if I've been somewhere very old, for example a National Trust place, you get echoes of something and you can't quite get to grips with it. I'm always quite affected by that.



*As always, immense appreciation goes to Andrew for giving his time so freely across both interviews, the subsequent one to feature in Doctrina Digest 7 (December 2026). All of Andrew Stephen's amazing books are for sale on Amazon and they come highly recommended. One review of 'Under a Norfolk Sky' states: 'My friend recommended that I get and read this poetry anthology...it's a sensational experience, full of beautiful details, hope and elements of comical insight...This guy absolutely nails everything...A brilliant book.'* Dan Macinally

## How Soon is Now?

**Retired Head of English, Ian Corns, examines Literacy's alignment with the long game.**



In my younger and more foolish days, everything was all about the 'now'. I suppose it entailed a certain ominous foreshadowing of the generations that were to come, where instant gratification - at the tip of a finger - was to rule supreme: the advent of an internet age where a person barely needs to leave their couch to receive a fresh-baked, efficiently delivered pizza, in a box.

For me, a sense of 'now' has always been problematic. As a fourteen year old, I naturally saw the world through a very different lens to my current life-driven view. To my absolute shame, I recall barely being interested at all in my grandfather's stories of playing for Nottingham Forest (Tom Peacock) in the nineteen thirties and regularly scoring four goals a game as an 'inside left'. "The keepers weren't very good, though, were they?" I'd say, briefly imagining some interminable game on a pudding pitch in grainy black and white, watched by flat-capped fans with whirring rattles. It's unreal how these things morph over time into something else - a set of missed opportunities to show love and to learn. At the time, little did I know that the years would roll by, burying me beneath a deluge of regret - deep, unfathomable incredulity; my mindset had only allowed for the 'now'. My mother once said to me, after I'd spat an utterly scathing comment in her direction, that at some point I'd regret it. By now, I was too big for a 'clip', so I couldn't comprehend how this could be. It was only words after all, and words surely disappeared into thin air - into obscurity - almost as soon as they'd been launched. Inarguably, that was their only lifespan. But she was ultimately right. My policy of 'now' was a limited, error-strewn venture, even if its traits - as indelible as getting a gaudy tattoo on Ingoldmells Market - had become impossible to shake off.

I always smirk ironically to myself these days when trying to activate the 'Now Tv' app on my television screen so I can watch a live football game. The glitches that occur invariably mean I have to switch it off at the plug, before restarting the whole process from source (the most essential directive in any IT manual). By the time I'm sorted, half the match has already gone, not that that's particularly tragic amidst the current turgid climate of sideways passing, presided over by bland, formulaic robots in designer clothes. Stick it in the mixer is what I say. Let the 'big man' get on the end of it.

I digress. Or, perhaps there's actually more to this than meets the eye. My contention is that 'now' is always the problem, especially if it takes on the guise of a default setting, which I'd argue it has invariably become. I recall, vividly, as far back as the seventies, going on a family holiday to Benidorm and staying in a beautiful, seafront hotel called The Salama, just fifty strides or so from the beach. It was the first time I'd ever been abroad and it was, frankly, amazing. I recollect there being two smartly dressed, swarthy 'doormen' (not in the sense of 'bouncers') and they'd courteously await your approach before holding open the palatial glass entrance which sparkled rabidly like jewels in the blazing sun. Then, they'd further make your day with a broken English, non-contextualised greeting of 'Man-chester U-nited'. Needless to say, long sun-drenched afternoons with crystal waters, Coca Cola in glass bottles, cigarette smoke climbing mesmerically up towards the streaky, yellowing bar ceiling like mythical serpents, and Spanish-themed entertainment nights also appeared to be an alluring cocktail of beauty for my mum and dad owing to the fact that they bought - on impulse, I presume - one of those traditional senorita dolls: the type of faux immersive holiday

memorabilia which could never hope to elicit the same depth of impossible gorgeousness that it had once ruthlessly extolled in its paradisiacal homeland amongst browsing wine-soaked Brits, the willing victims. Complete with red, flowing dress and seductive castanets in her raised, delicate hands, 'she was too good for this life' as Philip Larkin once wrote, and - upon our return to the cold, dank climate of the North West, something within her plastic heart must have instantly perished as she was cruelly cast adrift upon the downstairs toilet cistern with 'bog roll' shoved up her skirt while fat, incessant bullets of rain beat against the 'bubble glass' outer porch windows for weeks on end. A conversation piece, no less. Culture at its very best.

Many years on, the sticking point of 'now' very much remained my Achilles' Heel. I'd arrived in Skegness to undertake my NQT year as an English teacher at the local Secondary Modern. It was the summer of 1992 and, being well over a month away from my first pay day, I found myself sat on the beach anxiously flicking through one of two local newspapers, at the time, the now defunct and pragmatically titled 'Skegness News'. I was looking for mid-summer jobs in the Situations Vacant section. I was utterly 'skint', as they say, and this was made worse by the school, at which I was due to make my debut on 1st September, already having advised me not to gain holiday employment in any of the amusements, bars or shops selling seaside tat. It would detract from the professional persona which was to be required in abundance upon stepping into the classroom. "Everyone knows everyone round here," the Deputy Head had told me in a fairly grave tone. "Kids' parents, sisters, brothers, uncles and aunts all own the town's businesses. Your paths mustn't cross. Keep yourself separate. You wouldn't want to feel compromised, now, would you?" To my disappointment, nothing other than the aforementioned forbidden employment genres existed within the pages of the publication and with a despondent sigh, I folded the paper in two and stared numbly into the hissing, fizzing tide which crept ever closer, before beating an instant retreat as if trying to embroil me in a curious game of 'tig'.

But, just then, I had a thought. My eyes must have narrowed somehow, a tender outward sign akin to wincing at the brief pain felt when realising you could be onto something, while simultaneously reeling at the immediate prospect of failure...Making my way to the beach, I'd had to meander through a myriad of stalls which sprawled like shanty towns across litter patterned pavements - all selling something garish to discerning East Midlands and South Yorkshire punters. Door plaques for Chardonay, Kai, Chloe, Carissa, Kane. T-shirts adorned with 'Skegness is so bracing', sticks of rock designed to shatter your teeth and all manner of 'Skeggy/aquatic-themed fridge magnets, where the exotic eastern sea was always a beautiful, tantalising blue.

Fridge magnets.

This latter concept somehow resonated. Right now, a flash of inspiration jabbed the inside of my head. Light at the end of the tunnel. I'd had a brainwave, and felt sure all I needed was two weeks: right from its inception to the subsequent running of a fully operative craft stall outside the local shopping centre in town; a mere fortnight. After that, I'd be 'quids in'.

Looking around me on the beach was enough to confirm the plentiful whereabouts of all the resources I would ever need: shells and pebbles - big, small and very small. The intricate plan was to construct nautical fridge magnets based on football teams; from what I could see, this was the lifeblood of every self-respecting middle-aged male tourist, 90% of whom routinely donned a replica (tight-fit) shirt as a shout-out to their club of choice. Each product would feature a little man, a figurine, made of precisely placed miniature pebbles, painted in traditional kit colours: Liverpool (red), Man Utd (red, white and black), Nottingham Forest (red and white), Sheffield Wednesday (blue and white stripes), The Blades (red and white stripes), Mansfield Town (yellow and blue) etc. Each figure would have a football at his feet and be set on a background shell, acting as a diminutive plaque. And, in search of a company name, I allowed the thoughts in my head to rattle around, uncontrolled, like dodgems at the fun fair for the longest time... before realising (in tandem with the prominent 'noughties' designer clothes label, 'FCUK'), that I would in fact trade under the business mantle of...*wait for it*... 'F.Sea UK'.

It was 'all to play for' as far as I was concerned. Get rich now. And be happy. I hurried back to my bedsit and cleared a dust-coated table in the bay window, ready for production. I pulled the bed down from out of the wall and sat smiling to myself. Tomorrow, I would take a bag to the beach and collect the specifics of my trade. I'd need to get some strong glue, an array of acrylic paints and visit a kids' toy retailer to track down some small magnets in bulk. Right now, I was happy, and - by way of celebration, as if to somehow spur my euphoric sense still further on - I put another fifty pence in the electric meter and boiled the kettle for a nice cup of tea.

Anyone and everyone reading this will know that life continually gets in the way of our plans; in short, my best intentions went astray. There was no stall; I never made it big in the business world; never received a legal letter from 'FCUK' insisting that I desist from using their name and likewise didn't end up switching teaching subjects from English to Business due to my entrepreneurial credibility and acumen.

No. But I did make all the stock to sell. And I did have a huge tablecloth made, emblazoned with my firm's name 'F.Sea UK'. I even rang East Lindsey District Council to enquire about booking a 'pitch'. But, no sooner had I got into a position to start trading, than the nights drew in, the thousands of holiday makers crammed themselves lethargically back onto trains and coaches ahead of setting off for the resumption of real life in lands far away. And, alas, as autumn arrived in its fiery splendour, extinguishing the vivid hope that summer had once promised, I began my career as an English teacher...

*Is that it? Where's it heading, sir? We've come this far, so I suppose we need to know.*

Well, if I fast forward seventeen or so years, the same school - at which I was now Head of Department - set me the unenviable task of coming up with a Literacy Policy and presenting my vision to staff via both training and the utilisation of an engaging curriculum plan. The aim was to establish an accessible, unified (yet differentiated)

strategy, something which would empower youngsters in their pursuit of language learning and appreciation, while furthermore providing staff with a range of essential skills to ensure progress.

“Make sure you think outside the box,” they said. “Tap into the imagination of your peers. They’ll thank you for it in the long-run.” And this is where I had one of those rare epiphanies - a profound realisation: it suddenly dawned upon me that not everything needs to be ‘now’. Some aspects of life improve with age. They ferment. They are journey-based, and they evolve. My mind almost immediately settled upon the business I’d previously tried to set up, which for the most part still remained in my possession in a backroom cupboard. I dug it all out, dusted it off and saw how rough and ready the concept and resultant product had been. But that was all part of its charm. I could see that in an instant.

Shells...

“F.Sea Uk”, a play upon words.

My mind went into overdrive. The coastline is rich in learning points. If I could present the merits of this imaginative business idea, it would act as a key to the door whereby most parties, and indeed departments, in the room would be able to find some tributary or other by which to join the ‘flow’. *History* – castles (motte and bailey), invasion, political tides/waves, ‘shell shock’; *Maths* – cash flow, profit margins, overheads, taxes; *English* - product descriptions, persuasion. Does Macbeth become a shell of his former self once he’s been emasculated by his wife?; *Business* – product marketing; *Sport* - the positive effects of exercise; *Psychology* - the human need for belonging (the mentality of fandom); *Law* – is it legal to remove natural items from the beach?

In some respects, it was tenuous stuff. But that was all the fun of the fair. My job wasn’t to be domineering and autocratic. Instead, I needed Subjects to work out how they could plan two weeks of lessons from years seven to ten, which would ultimately feed into the loose, umbrella concept of ‘F.Sea Uk’, while encouraging – chiefly – reading and writing know-how. I was on a roll, fighting the good fight. All I did was model prospective approaches. They just needed the confidence and wherewithal to put it all into practice...and to see my entrepreneurial spirit physically laid out before them, *well* there was surely going to be nothing standing in our way. We were collaborating...

And guess what? It went down ‘a storm’. On the Inset Day held at a local Skegness hotel, in amongst a range of other pedagogical training providers and national presenters, I took the accolade of Speaker of the Day, and subsequently launched a coordinated Literacy Strategy with the enthusiastic support of just about every member of staff. The initiative proved to be so successful that senior leaders from different schools across the region came to meet with me to tap my resources and receive advice. It was a clear case of word spreading, and – apart from this – the biggest sense of satisfaction lay in the fact that I now realised the undoubted worth of allowing things to take shape over time without explicit manipulation or forced intent. Quite clearly, I’d demonstrated Literacy approaches within the themed window of a specific business market, before allowing the school curriculum to grow organically. It could even be argued that its success had been down to ‘parking’ an original idea for a number of

years, before picking it back up when the opportunity arose. In real terms, 'now' had become a relative concept. The idea of 'F.Sea UK' had always been there ever since that afternoon, years ago, when I'd been 'lost', disconcerted and 'potless' on Skeggy beach. Its central theme had been perpetually 'good to go', existing across the years as a multi-layered enterprise – a sleeping giant which had come to life once the right juncture had presented itself.



Half a decade later, when I moved schools, I was given the opportunity in Lincolnshire's rural South Holland district to replicate the feat with my new colleagues. This was an establishment that had been in the doldrums for a considerable number of years and urgently needed a boost in terms of cohesion, direction and staff 'buy-in'. I was apparently the catalyst that they needed.

"Good morning everyone," I enthused while standing at the front of a dusty old assembly hall which smelt of mothballs and apathy. "As most of you will know, my name is Ian Corns and it's my great pleasure, today, to introduce to you a business idea that I have been developing over the past few years. It goes by the name of..."

Suddenly, a hand went up belonging to a red-faced, surly looking gentleman in a tweed jacket.

"Yes sir," I self-interjected, inviting the early question.

"This sounds fabulous and everything," he said, "and it looks like you've really made an effort - but what on earth does it have to do with us?"

*Ian Corns*

*This article made me chuckle. When Liz and I introduced a whole school Literacy policy in school, many subject leaders said the same. Five years later, when spelling and reading scores were up and all classrooms had subject specific spellings on the wall, they knew. Nonetheless, when a government initiative called Citizenship was introduced, it was ditched! Not fashionable. Citizenship lasted five minutes like so many government initiatives. Politics, eh?!*

*Andrew*

### **Sonnet 43 – How do I love thee? by Elizabeth Barrett**

My understanding of love is that it's all about spending time with your family. I love my family, but I also love my phone and music.

In the poem, Elizabeth Barrett loves Robert Browning because the text says, 'I love thee with the passion I used to feel', which suggests she feels renewed, particularly when

considering, 'I love thee with a love I seemed to lose.' I think she loves Robert Browning to the deepest, widest and tallest emotions. She says that she loves him to the point that reaches God. Their love is therefore forever and powerful. She loves him all the time, day and night, 'by sun and candlelight.'

'I love thee freely.' It is her decision to love him, and the fact she says, 'I love thee purely' means she loves him like it's untouched snow on the ground, all perfect.

I think her father took her passion by being bossy and overbearing. He kept slaves so this is something she would never want to do. Her father made her feel distraught and worthless. She repeats, 'I love thee' because she is passionate about him. She loves him completely with the 'breath, smiles, tears' of all her life and she will continue loving him in Heaven, 'in the afterlife'.

My opinion is that it was right for her to run away to be with Browning. She would get to marry the person she wanted to be with and live her life with joy and happiness.

Emaan Fatima, Year 7 - KES



### **Spring's Eternal Beauty – Sonnet**

Shall I compare thee to a Spring evening?  
Thou art more wondrous and more mesmerising:  
Though rough rains blow away the darling showers of April  
And Spring's lease falls far too short as a beautiful angel  
And twilight skies filled with stars doth lead to dawn,  
The grey clouds and rough winds never prove  
Too wet as the eye of Heaven glimmers  
And fair from fair light shimmers

And thy eternal spring shall not fade  
Unlike the sunset giving blossom trees shade -  
Never lose that sense of gorgeousness  
Which, of all the seasons, is by far the best.  
So long as flowers bloom and petals dance in the wind  
So, friendship stays in forever life – a loving twist.

Ellie-Rose Elmslie – Year 7, KES



### **On the Run**

My kidnappers were rolling around on the cold stone floor. They were beating each other relentlessly. I looked over and saw the cell door wide open. And so, I made my move.

The cold air struck my face as I burst out into the corridor. Sprinting through the winding hallways, I searched, yearning for a way out. If I were found now, I would be finished. It would be over for me. My lungs burned as I continued running until a door came into view. I pushed myself harder, my feet pounding across the old flooring. Bracing myself for impact, I launched myself into the door. No. Locked. Just then, barking. I was so done. Looking down, I noticed a doggy flap. Swallowing what was left of my pride and dignity, I started to crawl through it, my face red, alight with embarrassment.

Once I'd successfully clambered through, I was up and running again, taking in my new surroundings. Forest. Pure, thick forest ahead. I ran for the trees. If I was going to receive cover, it would be in amongst the trees.

Looking back, I could see the door I'd gone through fly open, my captors jostling for position. I ducked into the bushes and foliage, crawling along slowly, trying to remain quiet and undetected, a painstakingly long and terrifying experience. Sitting up, stealing a glance backwards, all I could see was the dark green screens of my loneliness closing in.

Amelia Szeliga, Year 9 KES



## **Dystopia**

No one questioned the system anymore. The city was too advanced for that. Towering buildings glowed with artificial light, their windows flickering like thousands of watching eyes. Drones hovered above, silent but constant. Tracking every movement below. The citizens had learned not to look up: skies dirt brown during the day and foggy nights.

Among them was a 24-year-old woman named Amina. She walked slower than most, her steps uneven, her knee stiff from an injury that never fully healed. In a city built for perfection, weakness was not tolerated. But Amina had something others didn't. She noticed things. She noticed how the AI units copied human behaviours perfectly – never blinked at the wrong time. How their smiles were always the same. How their conversations felt rehearsed, like lines from a script. No one else seemed to care. Or maybe they had forgotten how to. Amina hadn't.

Once she had been part of it all. One of the brains behind the system. She had helped design the very things that now walked on the streets, the AI robots built to look human, think like humans, to replace what was considered flawed. And then came the clones. Not copies of machines, but copies of humans. Improved. Controlled. Perfected. That was when she'd left.

Or at least she'd tried to.

Now she kept her distance. She spoke little, watched more. People often mistook her silence for coldness, but it wasn't that. She simply didn't trust easily anymore. Not after what she knew – because the system didn't just replace people, it studied them. Every

movement. Every habit. Every weakness. Once it knew enough, the original was no longer of need.

Amina stopped walking. Something ahead caught her attention.

A group of figures stood still in the centre of the street, their heads tilted in the same direction, watching something. Waiting. Her chest tightened; slowly but surely, she followed the gaze. At the end of the road, a woman stood alone. Or at least she looked alone. Because beside her, just slightly behind, stood another version. Same face. Same posture. Same expression. Amina's breath caught. It had started again. The replacements. She stepped back, her injured knee protested but she ignored it. It was erasing. If she did nothing, there would be nothing left to see.

No real voices. No real choices. No real people. Just copies. Watch. Replace. Repeat. Amina clenched her fists. For the first time in a long time, she wasn't just observing. She was deciding. She knew something. A flaw. A weakness in the system, something she helped create and something she could destroy.

Tehila Mahwire – Year 9, KES



### **The Workhouse**

I sat in the dining hall, sounds of desperate eating echoing from the cold walls. Nobody was speaking – too busy trying to devour every last drop of the little food we were given. Mr Bumble could be seen, eating his plentiful meal, the mere smell of which made our

mouths drool. We were all quite malnourished, so our thin bodies were shivering through the thin rags we called our uniforms.

Edward tapped me on the shoulder, his thin but tall body looming over my tiny one. 'Hey, Oliver, it's time for you to go up to ask for more,' his voice hungry with anticipation and a little croaky from malnutrition. We'd all agreed that one of us had to ask – and the choice went to me. I was terrified. I didn't know how the Master, stood at the copper pot, would react, but I knew I couldn't back down.

As I stood, the hall held its breath. The floor was cold under my small feet as I trembled with fear. The walk was around ten seconds, but it felt like ten years, and with each step the burden on my shoulders deepened like a knife to my heart.

I muttered inside my head: 'Just ask. They need you to ask.' When I reached the Master, my breath shook with fear and anticipation.

'P..Please sir, I want some more...' I said, flinching with each heartbeat as the starvation hit harder than ever.

'You what?' the Master screeched. 'You want some more? You greedy child.' He stood up and peered over me.

It was then that the realisation hit. This had NOT been a good idea...

Lilly Sinclair – Year 8, KES

### **The Workhouse**

I was jolted awake by the awful ringing of the beadle's bell. I groaned, reluctantly getting up off the not-so massive brick we were expected to call 'beds'. My prison-like uniform lay crumpled and stained at my feet. After getting dressed, we all filed into a line of malnourished inmates, slowly walking to the literal Hell we called our lives.

Just then, another group of boys made their way into the dinner hall, each face etched into sly smiles, whispering amongst themselves. They were definitely planning something, I could tell, and whatever it was, I had a strange feeling about it.

The pot was opened to reveal the poisonous vomit we were meant to enjoy. Most children were used to the embarrassment of a meal we were fed but I did not think that, as long as I lived, I would ever enjoy gruel. My turn came and the gruel was plopped into my bowl. I headed to the benches and sat meekly. I could sense a stillness in the room. Something was most definitely not right. Oliver, the meek, quiet boy who usually kept himself to himself was now receiving a pat on the back by his so-called mates, his face a ghostly white.

Unexpectedly, he got up, trembling as he walked towards the wicked Master. Upon reaching him, he muttered, quiet as a mouse, 'Please sir, I want some more.' The room froze. No one dared to make a sound. We all knew Oliver was in a world of trouble...

### **What Makes a Hero?**

***“A hero is someone who saves the day, and also saves the snacks from the couch cushions.”***

***Joke:*** *Why did the hero go to the doctor?*

*Because they’d caught a brutal, villainous cold*

***My heroes:*** *David Livingstone – Christian missionary and explorer*

*Steve Jobs – Apple co-founder*

***H*** – *Humility*

***E*** – *Empathy*

***R*** – *Resilience*

***O*** – *Optimism*

***E*** – *Endurance*

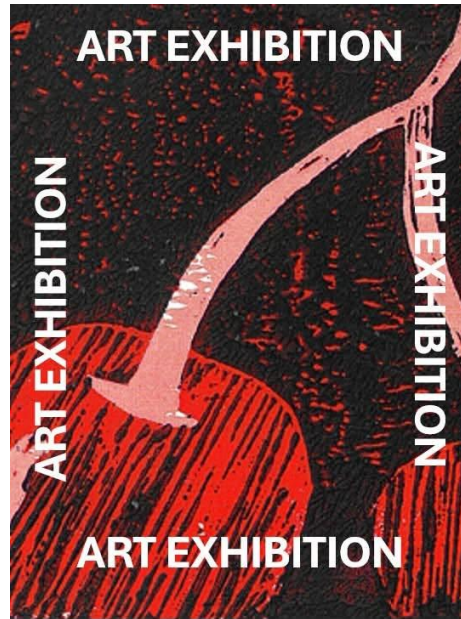
***S*** – *Sacrifice*

A hero’s heart beats strong and free  
With courage fuelled by empathy.  
They stand for morals, a guiding light  
Amidst the darkness, shining bright.

Their path is fraught with fear and strife,  
Yet bravery whispers, ‘Hold on tight’.  
Hope’s flame flickers and carries the fight,  
Illuminating the darkest night.

With every step they pave the way  
For others to follow, come what may,  
Their selfless acts a work of art,  
A hero’s legacy from the start.

Ajala Jemima – Year 10, KES



**When:** 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> July 2026 / **Where:** The Centre, KES / **Time:** 16:30pm – 18:00pm

### **Curiosity Killed Humanity**

Nervously, he opened the mysterious, ruby-coloured box with high expectations. But instead of gold, a twisted, shadowy figure climbed out with an air of menace. The unsettling silhouette was that of a misshapen human with an outline that shook like an animated doodle. He could hear children wailing as it stomped towards him and, as it did so, he was suddenly aware of dull-coloured fireworks, almost like moths, shooting out of the scarlet chest, rattling like flying insects zooming past.

He looked fearfully out of the window as the fireworks absorbed the brightness of the world. This obsidian profile had a face – a contrasting blob of pure ghostly white. It blinded him as the vague outline of misery ran outside to cause more pain and suffering.

He realised then what that black, unsettling, uncontrollable, shadowy humanoid was.

Anxiety.

Devlon Coe – Year 9, KES

### **Curiosity's Killer Vengeance**

Anxiously, she opened the dark, mysterious box with gold engravings that shone in the light. It had been too tempting. The box had stood there perfect and untouched as the rays had bathed it in brightness. She'd picked up the heavy key and inserted it...

Carefully, she lifted the lid and every colour imaginable poured out. But, after that, came darkness. It filled the room and enclosed around her. Suddenly, it went cold. Everything in her midst was lifeless. She felt a tingle down her spine. Then it struck her. She felt as if she'd been stabbed in the back a thousand times. All trust had gone – as if she now had to avoid everyone she came across. Like Betrayal had jumped out of the box to strangle her - so strong you would never see it coming, but when it hits you, you know it's there.

Amber King – Year 9, KES



### **The Island**

As night fell on the island, the surrounding seas grew black and the landmass filled up with dullness like a deathly vessel, the once lovely trees now looking like monsters you once imagined in your head when you were little. The boisterous water crashed against the large rocks, roaring as darkness took over.

Fifty metres inland, a deep cave lay shrouded in its own gloom. The only thing to pierce this blanket was a pair of bloodshot eyes...

Within minutes, the creature fought off its pangs of hunger by wreaking havoc. Fruit from the trees. Eggs laid by the turtles. Dropped coconuts. The fish from the sea. Its razor-sharp claws gripped the trees, bending them in a show of crazy strength.

But, as the morning sun began to kiss the sand and the palm trees waved in the wind as if nothing had happened, the creature slouched, retreated and retired.

Now, the blue water smashed upon the shiny rocks, turtles laid their eggs and tropical fruits caught the early warmth of the dawn light.

Noah Everitt, Year 8, KES

## The Irony of Irony

*KES Head of English, Ian Corns, holds a pre-retirement enquiry into the exact nature of our appreciation of 'irony'.*



Does anyone truly understand what irony is? We throw certain phrases around like confetti, as if we wholly appreciate their meaning: 'Ironically...That's ironic...The irony of it all...' But is everything we consider to be 'ironic' actually an ironical instance? My suspicion is that we are inhibited in our pursuit of truly understanding its meaning, not because of a lack of will - more because of the fact we live in an increasingly instantaneous world where common parlance affords us no time or right to explain or reflect upon the credibility of what we say; life moves immediately on. A parallel, by way of illustration and transparency, could be drawn with the ingredients of a joke. If you deliver a 'gag' and you have to explain it, from the key structures of 'set-up' to 'assumption' to 'pay-off'/'punchline', then clearly it winds up as being distinctly unfunny. Ironic, really, as jokes are intricate and sophisticated processes of language which deserve due regard and reflection. It's a great shame because the self-esteem of humans is integrally linked to their relationship with language, and this likewise is heavily synonymous with audience. 'It makes him and it mars him', something which the Porter says in the play 'Macbeth' when implying that we can use language to create double meanings, a duality which culminates in him acknowledging that we can deceive others on a number of levels but not God, whose final reckoning reflects only the truth. In many ways, Shakespeare's clown-like construct talks ironically and chaotically about our tendency for self-deception and yet personifies irony, ultimately, in its truest form as his comical stupidity belies the credibility of his theory, something which underpins the meaning of the whole play.

When I talk about irony, both inside and outside the classroom, I couch my expressions in layman's terms, partly because I need my audience to be happy and receptive, and partly because there's an agonising, eternal millisecond in which I hesitate over the question: 'Have I got this right?'

"So, irony is where something unexpected happens, erm probably even the opposite of what's expected, and there's a bit of a twist at the end." *Silence.*

"Ok, erm, it's built on paradox and juxtaposition with a bit more given to you as an outcome." *A sea of blank expressions looking back.*

"Like, if a teacher constantly preaches about being on time and is uncompromising about standards, but then turns up late to class, that's ironic. Even more ironic if their lateness is down to idle chat in the staffroom over breaktime which went on a little too long." *A couple of kids show lights switching on behind their eyes.*

I'm gaining in confidence now. Time for an anecdote : "Yeah, just the other day, I stopped by a junk shop. I bought an industrial lampshade. It had either been a fixture in a factory during the Industrial Revolution, shedding light on a skilled worker's dexterous, precise hand movements as a British-made product took shape in his midst, or it had been part of a gantry of stage lights, bathing the key characters of a London musical in a blaze of recognition and glory, ahead of a resounding encore...Hard to say which version of accolade I'd prefer to lay claim to if I were this particular piece of ironmongery...it now resides in my garden, rammed with compost and choked with weeds, a plant graveyard. Overflowing with lifeless, brown, flaccid stems. Incessantly rained on. How the mighty fall. You'll no doubt see an irony to how this artefact has ended up, and what it has now become." *Nope. I've lost them again.*

My angst about irony and its identity stretches even as far as looking at the world-wide hit 'Isn't it Ironic' by Alanis Morissette. My disclaimer, here, is that No I'm not at all a fan of her work, and - Yes - I hold my hands up to having gone down a rabbit hole on this...The song basically cites a range of instances which, according to the songstress, constitute clear cases of irony. In fact, as she warbles reflectively towards its conclusion, she applies the label of extremity through the line: 'A little too ironic, don't you think?' Well, in all honesty, no I *don't* think. Famously, Alanis states via her lyrics that 'It's like rain on your wedding day.' This is more a case of misfortune than irony. Maybe, it's not even unlucky if you happen to like rain. Walking in the rain is supposed to be cleansing and romantic, the two protagonists drawing ever closer to each other in a bid to get under the umbrella and feel the warmth that their partner brings. Even putting this to one side, the British climate means you're always expecting rain. There's nothing unexpected about it. The weather, to this end, can change in an instant.

And what about her suggestion that 'An old man turned 98/He won the lottery and died the next day'? Perhaps this would have credible grounding in irony if we were told that he'd been trying all his life to land the big prize. The devil, here, lies in the contextual detail. Instead, we're likely to assume that the deceased winner had realised in his latter years, like surely we all do, that money doesn't mean happiness and that the only thing worth doing with it, just three years from being a centurion, is to leave it to your loved-ones, who absolutely do think wealth is money and money is happiness. It's a blessing, therefore, and feeds the beauty of his legacy. It's not ironic. Neither is the line: 'A No Smoking sign on your cigarette break'. Employment law is a product of consultation and notice. The featured sign is hardly going to be an unannounced surprise, and a 'morning break' - as far as I know - has only ever been termed a 'cigarette break' by those who seek a desperate infusion of nicotine, in the same way that others might call it a tea or coffee break because of their penchant for a specific drink or need for caffeine. My advice, here, is to forget the pretence of irony and either go off site for a cig, or - better still - give up the filthy habit altogether.

'So, what is ironic?' I hear you ask. 'Rather than be a 'nay sayer', tell us what it means.' Well, with my son now twenty-two years of age and myself approaching retirement after giving my all to teaching for thirty-four years, I understand as clearly as anyone that, despite sweating blood in the 'moment' of deadlines, reviews and Ofsted's, and sitting for hours on end interminably marking essays and exam papers, the journey has somehow gone in a flash. There's a distinct irony to this. We live our lives slowly but, despite the painful pedestrian nature of - for much of each year - going to work in the dark and coming home in the dark, and moving bits of scrimped and saved cash into 'the joint account' so a week in Corfu can be had in August, and waking up at 2 am engulfed by a maelstrom of thoughts linked to work, it all actually goes so very quickly.

In 1992, when I first became a Newly Qualified Teacher, I washed up in Skegness like a bit of driftwood, intent on seeing how it went for a while at the local Secondary Modern school, the once notorious and now defunct 'Earl of Scarbrough High School' (I stayed for twenty-two years, including battling on through its subsequent confused 're-start' identity of St. Clement's College and, more latterly, Skegness Academy). As a twenty-two-year-old, I was largely directionless, though I knew – conversely - I'd be expected to give guidance to a generation of seaside kids, signposting their futures and giving them a potential escape, if required, from what I could already sense was a dead-end town.

Back in mid-August of 1992, I couldn't have known the journey that awaited me. I'd fixed up a 'long stay' in a local boarding house, while I somehow got my bearings ahead of the forthcoming Autumn Term. I remember, vividly, standing in a red phone box on a nearby street corner and receiving the horrific words down the crackly line that my relationship of eight years was over. Something about us heading in different directions. Something along the lines of: "It's run its course" and more specifically, "If you think I'm moving to Skegness, then you must be more stupid than you look." This was followed by the dialling tone. I walked back to my lodgings, broken like glass, amidst the mocking caws of crows on sun-baked shed roofs - to a room in which the bed needed pulling down from out of the wall, and 50p needed periodically putting into the relentlessly hungry electric meter, without which I couldn't even put on the light or watch tv. I looked down at the holes in the cigarette scorched carpet beneath my feet. This was going to be tough.

Once the fog began to clear, I reflected on how the relationship had always exhibited red flag warning signs. For one thing, she was from Wigan. In Chorley, Wigan was conspicuous via the fact that absolutely nobody appeared to talk about the town, still less support its football club, Wigan Athletic, which – until the late 1990s - played every home game at a rain-lashed, backstreet monstrosity - a sinister, brooding venue with cowshed stands called Springfield Park. I recalled going there with my mates when I was seventeen one night to support Bolton Wanderers in the cup. The surrounding terrace houses threw long, ghoulis shadows across the claustrophobic, menacing alleyways as the ground's floodlights punched holes - shifting, fleeting yellow pools of hope - into the despondent North West sky. This, for us, was a rite of passage. We'd gone over to enemy territory. It was something we could tell our mates about the next day. Real kudos - like adventurers or pioneers on a mission to uncover an undiscovered world. No one from Chorley went to Wigan. Even when we were in the fifth year at Parklands High School and the lads would stand on the relevant train platform in their eighties' designer 'garms' to go to the match on a Saturday - Platform One for Preston North End and Blackburn Rovers; Platform 2 for Man United, Man City, Liverpool, Everton and of course first stop, Bolton - no one ever went to Wigan. Ever. I took some small comfort from this. It was obviously never meant to be. The irony of it - *I'd found love in Wigan*, something which now felt akin to Macbeth, a Tragic Hero, seeking to unsettle the Natural Order and disrupt Divinity. It all made sense at last. It had been fundamentally wrong.

This said, my attempts to settle into Skegness life were full of initial setbacks. The pace of life was slow with each second hanging in the air for much longer than was bearable. I wasn't used to it. It was as if time clung to you, hung onto your 'trackie top' and draped over you like a smothering cloak, refusing to evolve, push-on or renew itself. It was as if it were scared of being consigned to the bin of yesterday's news. Each tick of the high street clock dragged its feet, stubbornly stalling, outstaying its welcome. My personal thoughts invariably cascaded, rebounded, hurtled and smashed with great velocity against the walls of my head, before somehow emerging - usually unfiltered - crashing out of my mouth, a product of the environment in which I'd been brought up. The locals, by contrast, already had

established networks, invariably family-based, often living right on top of each other in neighbouring streets. Their thoughts seemed slow, logical, practical, apathetic, complacent, narrow and superficial. Moreover, I got the distinct feeling that I was an Outsider and that I always would be - I was kept precisely at arm's length, perhaps as a consequence of their cynicism towards the transient seaside population, an irony in itself as the town's economy relied heavily on visitors. It was as if, despite trying to reverse the norms, there was 'nothing much down for me'. I'd become a sidelined viewer, restricted to merely watching a very underwhelming soap opera from an enforced distance.

Whether it was how things were panning out, or the lingering after-effects of having been unceremoniously dumped over the phone, I cannot say, but - for whatever reason - my early performances playing for Skegness Town FC, the Lilywhites, left a lot to be desired. I'd sit there, time and again, in the tiny red and white breezeblock changing room, realising that the lads around me were the best this East Coast resort could offer, which - in turn - afforded them the opportunity to view everyone else from an elevated height of arrogance. It was evident in the way they spoke, trained, played and socialised. We were, at the time, just putting the finishing touches to pre-season. We'd played Stapleford Town from Nottinghamshire and I'd done OK, though I felt there were gears that I needed to find which were somehow eluding me. Sport is as much about psychology as it is physical exertion, and I couldn't help but shroud myself in the past where - just three or four years earlier - I'd more than held my own in the reserves for Blackburn Rovers and then likewise for Bury FC at Gigg Lane. I'd played against Burnley (twice), Liverpool (a game watched by Kenny Dalglish), Everton, Man United (twice) and Bolton Wanderers to name just a few. Ironically, I was now struggling - sat in a parochial dressing room, waiting to go out and play beneath a huge, clear sky in which the sun hung blindingly low - a sky from which rain rarely fell. I missed the sideways downpours of Lancashire. As I stood in the little tunnel with the Wombwell Town (Barnsley) players emerging from their own team talk, I began to make plans to return to the place of my youth...

After the match, I sat very much isolated and marginalised on the changing room bench, scrunched up like a piece of wastepaper, beneath my kit peg. "You played well!" the captain said to me, his voice dripping with sarcasm.

"Why don't you come over here and say that?" I replied. And, quite unhelpfully, he did.

So, for a number of reasons, I was dropped for the pre-season finale, the visit of a Sheffield United XI, the following Thursday, in front of a bumper crowd, but was recalled to the starting line-up for the first league game of the season away in Boston. By then, I'd resolved to join another club. I could not recall the last time I had laughed either inwardly or out loud. Maybe the onset of the school term would provide me with some purpose.

About four days later, I was walking through the town centre when I heard a random voice: 'Oi mate.' It was said in a South Yorkshire accent. There was no Lincolnshire twang. I turned round to see two blokes. "Mate, we saw you play for Skeg," one of them, a short, heavy-set guy with ginger hair began. His friend nodded. "My name's Nidge, by the way. I run a Sunday League team. Come and see us sometime at the Welcome Inn on Burgh Road and we'll sign you up. I'm also the landlord of the pub. You'll have a good laugh with us. Trust me." Again, his friend nodded.

And so commenced a friendship which lasted the best part of thirty years, put on hold only by the fact he recently died. Across three decades, my eyes were truly opened to life. The pub hosted a never-ending procession of characters, most of whom lived on the adjacent estate, over the main road, a tangled mess of houses and tenement flats where front gardens hosted three-seater settees for reasons of being neighbourly and 'community-spirited' and where, as soon as the sun came out, lads on small mountain bikes had their

shirts off, always with a spare bike tyre draped over their left shoulder, and colourfully attired mothers sallied after Mr Whippy's ice-cream van, their brood of loud, excited kids in tow like raucous ducklings, embroiled in the shrillness of the jingle and all the hope it carried.

Many of my newfound teammates accepted me immediately. Most had rebellious and uncompromising tales to tell of how they'd spectacularly self-destructed in school - and how against all odds, they'd had to adapt to an uncaring and indifferent world by finding alternative ways of making money. I knew, despite the differences in our lives, and the basic, vehement disagreements to be had over the worthiness of studying Shakespeare, that if I needed it - whether it was through football, humour or chat - each of them would give me the shirt off their back. Over the years, in addition to me playing Saturdays, we won cups, got promoted, got relegated, got fined by the league, played darts, pool, celebrated birthdays, Christmases, christenings and paid our respects at wakes, including that of my own child. In all this time, there was nothing more reassuring than to be eating Sunday lunch and looking up to see a big line of hanging sticky tape, a vertical party streamer festooned with dead flies like buttons down a workman's overalls. Sometimes, it would sway in tandem with the breeze ghosting through a slightly ajar window so that it looked, to all intents and purposes, as if the place was breathing. Over at the carvery, Big Bill, one of the kitchen staff who'd clearly been out the previous night, sweated off his hangover while cutting the pork. I bought a house thirteen doors up from this establishment based on the very real notion that, as an ever-evolving community of individuals, it made me feel alive. The experience, over many years, taught me how to talk to people without fear or prejudice. I learnt that humans are essentially all different, and all the same, and many of the skills of communication that I adopted, I put into practice - to good effect - in the classroom. It's about acceptance. Both ways. Thinking on your feet. Matching words to audience. Admiring the quick wit of those who are naturally funny, something which can't ever be taught. The raconteurs. I mean, who would ever wish to be anywhere else than here? A place where the resident chef, a bloke called Keith, was so imaginatively christened 'Cornbeef Keith' by the clientele? In one word: Magical. But everything changes. Nidge died. His heartbroken mrs clearly and understandably wanted a new start somewhere/anywhere else, no doubt the happy memories conspiring now to knife her and haunt her dreams, the epitome of irony, where good turns to malevolence at the drop of a hat.



So what of it? Where do we go from here? Well, if I take you to the Welcome now, it's surely the very pinnacle of what people would define as ironic. Steel shutters encase the windows and doors, all around the premises. A cold and impenetrable exterior with a sign warning

everyone, regardless of who they are, to steer clear, stay away. History counts for nothing - *just do one.*

The Welcome Inn. Its name, emblazoned still in huge letters across the front, now attracts derision. There's arguably nothing welcoming, homely or comforting about it. The grounds, slowly filling up with the fragments and offcuts of dysfunctional people's lives - old pushchairs, bags of rubbish, an odd shoe, a broken patio chair, a free-standing advertisement for a local plumber, the board smashed in two after a passing drunk put his foot through it. All of this pollutes the picture. Undeniably so. But I realised something as I passed this ramshackle shell of a pub just the other night on my way home from a tasteless bite to eat in town. I noticed that there's a light on behind the shutters, which are holistically perforated presumably to show a would-be burglar that there's nothing worth nicking inside. I went up really close and looked in - cautiously at first, setting my feet the way a boxer does in anticipation of a wild swing. At the risk of being shot down as a fantasist or ridiculed, it seems to me its soul was asking for the old times to return. Yes, I'm a romantic, perhaps a dreamer. The bricks radiated a sense of longing after absorbing years of anecdotes, emotions, confrontations, fresh starts and old mistakes. The soft light pushed out, oozing into the cold evening air, tangible like warm felt, seeking to hold, embrace...for old time's sake, its faint exhalation glancing across the pallor of my face. Where was everyone? What had they all become? When would this purgatory end?

There's nothing ironic about the Welcome. Maybe iconic, but not ironic. It's a place that wants to accommodate people's happiness. I know it is. I've never been more sure of anything. It's as much a victim in this sorry affair as any of us, and I know it yearns to open the glow of its heart once more to the cyclical footfall of flawed folks' lives.

It's the Welcome Inn, and this is not its fault.

## And finally.....

"Success is not final; failure is not final; it is the courage to continue that counts."  
Winston Churchill

I suppose that every generation there has ever been thinks that the time of their youth was a simpler time, a better time and one with less stress. It might be because to a young person everything comes more easily. We cannot imagine being tired, forgetful or lacking in enthusiasm when we are young and looking ahead. Only this week, having listened to a group of sixth form girls from Kings School Ely, I became exasperated with what seemed like the massacre of the English Language. One of them noticed and asked me why I clearly disapproved of them. I gave a number of examples; the use of like instead of a comma, the misuse of devastated and literally, the ugliness of train station, impactful, civilisational and evidential. Each time I gave an example they laughed and pointed at each other and said, "You say that all the time!" They tried to reassure me, pointing out that they didn't write as badly as they spoke. I admitted that I was a terrible reactionary who can't accept the influence of American culture or the fact that language is dynamic and ever changing. When I got off, I realised that although we

probably didn't agree, we'd had a respectful debate and enjoyed each other's company. It made my day really.

I am glad that I grew up in the sixties. I still enjoy the music; wish I still had my hair and

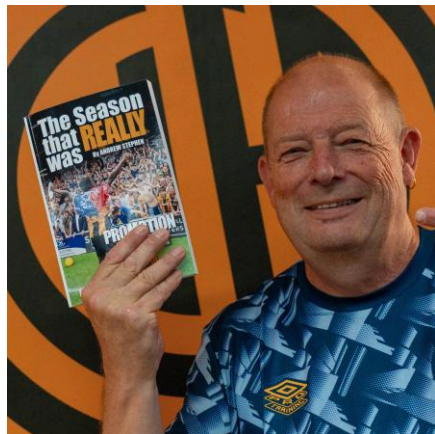


remember the efforts to create a fairer society. Can we imagine Woodstock happening now? The Health and Safety police would have a field day! The advent of mobile phones, laptops and AI have changed our world beyond recognition. Despite the very reasonable fears we have of their effects, there are huge benefits too. When I first became Newsletter Editor, I had to print off and post about 250 newsletters. That number is less than 40 now. I email most copies, all over the world, wherever our members are. The school Facebook site and my own Friends of KES have kept increasing numbers of people up to date about what is happening in the school as well as keeping all of us who care about KES in touch. I always dreamed that the OLA could have more of a presence in school, and I believe that we are more welcome and more effective than ever. The school celebrates its heritage everywhere. There are blazers on the wall and in the

Lennensian Library there are newsletters and booklets about the OLs and the school and books written by former pupils. It is a fitting place for our AGM, even if I find myself thinking about meals I ate there sixty years ago and the boys I ate them with. Our lives pass in a flash but our school lays much of the groundwork.

One of the huge values of an Association like ours is the sense of fellowship it engenders. The school is a huge part of our lives and what we all have in common whatever our age or era. It gives me huge pleasure that I am in touch still with many of my contemporaries. Indeed, I still get to meet some of them. At eighteen, I never foresaw that. I hear from OLs all over the world. Many ask after their friends and whether they are still around. I have met some remarkable people and heard from many more. Some, I know, didn't quite fit into the school system. Some were written off. Others were not particularly nice people during their time here but have blossomed into caring pillars of the community. Coincidence? Maybe, but I don't think so. We all learned things which helped us on our way later in life. Some people don't like to think about their time at school, sometimes out of guilt and some for an unreasonable sense of failure. No one should live in the past, but it is always a very important part of who we become. Had it not been for KES and the OLs, I would never have had any books published, or the knowledge or interest to write any. I have been inspired by my friends and some of my former teachers. Some of my friends have served with me on the committee and it is an enormous privilege to work with them. I wax sentimental, but I know that the present school acknowledges the truth of what I am saying. Only recently, the flag was flown at half-mast in memory of David Cobbold and Max Rust, both former students, who may not have known each other but had the school in common. The flag will always be flown at half-mast if the school are informed of deaths of OLs. It typifies the school's emphasis on Respect and I am glad of it.

I am hoping to produce a book at some point about the Boarding House and its place in society, particularly regarding military families. People have mixed memories of their time there. Many had to cope with the idea that their families were thousands of miles away as they explored the delights and trauma of being teenagers in a very demanding environment. I think it helped me in many ways, if only because I liked Sport and the Great Outdoors. We also had to work hard, a good thing for me, as I was a pretty lazy child. It is a way of life consigned to history now, but I would love to hear accounts from other boarders, prepared to think back and to share their experiences. The Committee has suffered from more than its fair share of age, illness and infirmity this year and we are looking to recruit younger members of the committee and some staff representatives too to further strengthen our bond with the school. We believe that we have taken the Association forward, but we can't carry the baton for ever. I have been Chairman and Newsletter Editor for a long time now and the time for change is approaching. Someone who is less of a Luddite perhaps. A woman maybe? I am delighted to say that Ian Corns has agreed to join us. The first young blood for years!



Andrew

Like other organisations, we struggle to attract younger members, but it is vital that we do in order to have a future. I know that traditionally people don't tend to think fondly of their old school until the first flush of youth has passed. But it happens. If you get the chance, please tell those you know that the Association belongs to everybody who has ever been a pupil at the school and that they will be welcome. At a tenner a year it's an absolute bargain. You get to have a say and access to one of the best school archive websites there is.

I will end by saying again how grateful we are to the KES staff for the very obvious improvement in the school's performance. I would also like to thank all my contributors and my committee who make my job as Chairman such a pleasure.

Until the Spring,

[acstephen@hotmail.com](mailto:acstephen@hotmail.com)

If you would like to contribute to the next edition, or comment on any of the issues raised in this one, please contact me.

Deadline for contributions to the next edition is MARCH 1st, 2027.