



ROUNDWOOD PARK ALUMNI Newsletter 26: March 2019

4www

www.roundwoodpark.co.uk/alumni



Page | 1

PLEASE forward this newsletter to ex-Roundwood friends and encourage them to make contact to be added to our mailing list. This applies especially if you are holding 'mini' reunions so please let us know of other alumni who are not, as yet, receiving these newsletters.

Help us to keep in touch with you.

- Alumna/ladies if you get MARRIED please inform us of your new surname.
 - PLEASE inform us with your correct/preferred contact details.
- Changing jobs often means a change in email address. Please email us or use the link to update details. <http://www.roundwoodpark.co.uk/alumni-registration-form/>

Happy Days? Almost a decade on - escapees from 2009



But do they keep in touch with each other? So much easier now. Alumni in the News

1.Special Rugby report from Matt Hunter PE dept.



In the Premiership Cup fixture (26th January) where Saracens beat Harlequins, alumnus Ralph Adams-Hale (wearing 17 in the clip) made a very decent contribution late on having come off the bench. He's developing a reputation as a young prop who can do certain things that not all props can. Promising at the age of 21.

In the highlight package (only 3 mins in total)....he pops up near the end and gets quite a shout from the commentator. Can't miss him. Great big ginger lad with loads of pace hitting a great line!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9S48SKleC3Q&feature=youtu.be>

Page | 2

2. Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan steering group memeber.



As a member of Harpenden Town Council, Georgie Calle was involved in the Housing Section of the Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan's Steering Group.



3.International acclaim for Opera Composer

Omar Shahryar (2003) appeared on Channel 4 News to talk about his pioneering opera for young people on the difficulties they face talking about the effects and causes of terrorism: <https://www.channel4.com/news/students-stage-opera-about-terrorism-threat>

'A Shoe Full of Stars' went on to win the Best Opera prize at the international Young Audience Music Awards held in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, beating fierce competition from world-renowned opera houses. The project is now looking to tour the



UK and Europe - keep an eye out for it at www.operaschmopera.co.uk.



2019 will see Omar's next youth opera, The Magic Lantern, performed at London's Royal Opera House,

as well as him following in the footsteps of Dr Smith by becoming a Doctor (of music) himself.

4.The world's toughest row - Alumna Caroline Wilson and two friends

Previously reported but here is an update

The Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge is the premier event in ocean rowing – 30 crews from around the world competing to cross 3000 miles of ocean, powered only by their own strength and determination.

The idea of the Challenge race came to Sir Chay Blyth whilst he was rowing the Atlantic Ocean in 1966 with John Ridgeway. They faced a 92 day battle against hurricanes, 50 foot waves and near starvation. The boats and technology may have changed since the '60s, but the challenge offered by the mighty Atlantic remains.

Find out more, listen to Caroline (Team), read their blog & see how many plastic bottles are discarded in the ocean.



Page | 3

<http://www.statusrow.com/>

We would like to hear from you if you if you have been in the news, print or on screen or any activity or venture you would like to share.

How to find out what happens at/in RPS?

Besides the Alumni newsletter you can access the RPS alumni site to search for Alumni News, <https://roundwoodpark.co.uk/alumni-news/> ,for fellow classmates on Alumni Listings, <https://roundwoodpark.co.uk/alumni-listings/> .

The RPS Newsletter, '**Roundup**' (Not a Monsanto sponsored Weedkiller!) is produced fortnightly and can be found here: <https://roundwoodpark.co.uk/roundup-newsletters/>

There is also '**Park Times**' which is Roundwood Park's online magazine, brought to you by the students under the auspices of the 6th form Senior Leadership Group (SLG) Communication Captains.

<https://roundwoodpark.co.uk/park-times-school-magazine/>

A fairly regular feature in Roundup is '**Spotlight**' which focuses on the impact that the expressive arts have had on some of our alumni's lives and careers.



Expressive Arts

SPOTLIGHT



In this week's edition of Round up, we talk to Kat Nunn about her life since taking Performing Arts and PE at key stage 5.

When I was at Roundwood, I took a full A-level in Performance studies, finishing in 2006. I also took PE up to end of AS level. I wanted to go to dance school and become a choreographer. I also took biology, English lit and dance outside of school over the 2 years of sixth form. I was always encouraged to do subjects I liked as I knew I'd work hard. They also supported the extra curricular activities I'd done for years, dancing with Hertfordshire youth dance company and playing in lots of sports teams.

From these A levels, I grew in confidence and learnt about projecting my voice within a crowd, thinking creatively and under time pressure, working as a team and playing to each other's strengths. I also learnt about time management, as we did lots of extra rehearsals both in PE and in performing arts. In PE I also learnt more about conditioning and behaviour in sports training and skill learning. I found this really interesting which inspired an interest in psychology. Working as a team with people who weren't necessarily in my school friendship group brought us together and we still all talk over 10 years later!

After A levels, I deferred my university place on a dance BA course to complete a dance foundation degree at the Scottish school of contemporary dance. The course was very intense but a great experience. I definitely could not have done this and would not have got onto it without my past experience in Performing Arts - it made me able to prepare and choreograph for the audition and interview. It also gave me a theoretical understanding of performance art which was integral for the interview. During this though, I decided that I didn't want to perform; I was worried about the uncertainty of a performing career and I had become more and more interested in psychology and human behaviour. I contacted the Uni where I had deferred the dance degree and met with them to discuss a transfer onto a psychology and sociology BSc. They accepted this and were really complimentary of my maturity and confidence at that age, which I put down to my experience in Performing Arts. They also recognised my transferrable skills as I had never taken sociology or psychology.

At university, I completed a placement year in industry with the Southampton Youth Offending Team. Here, I worked on a project setting up a dance therapy project for young offenders. I continue to be involved with this, and I completed my undergrad research on this project, and have since presented it as an academic poster at the British Psychological Society's annual conference for the faculty of children, adolescence and families. This is an international conference. Again, skills in public speaking and presenting were vital. I also think my experience in dance was vital for getting involved in this project in the first place.

I've gone on to do an MSC in forensic psychology, a post grad dip in psychological therapies (CBT) and now my professional doctorate in clinical psychology. I think all of these have used skills acquired from all of my A-levels. None have required an A-Level in psychology. They've needed good grades, a solid mindset and for me to work as a team player, to do presentations, to work to tight deadlines, to perform under pressure and to think creatively.

I have worked for over 6 years in the NHS, firstly as an assistant psychologist, then as a qualified low intensity CBT therapist, and now as a qualified doctor of clinical psychology in Edinburgh. I have worked with young people and patients in high secure forensic settings, and now work in the diagnosis and management of distress in dementia, and I hope to use dance movement therapy as part of my on-going clinical practice and research.

I continue to dance at local classes, where I have met many friends as I have travelled around different cities for my career. It's also been a source of self-care. My job can be time consuming, challenging and stressful, so it's good to take time out with a passion. People have always been really interested in my Performing Arts history both personally and professionally. I wouldn't change a thing and I have never been held back for not having an A Level in psychology.

My advice to anyone choosing A level options would be to take what you like, the things you feel passionate about, the things you want to read about and want to spend time doing. These are the things that will inspire you to choose studying over procrastinating, and the things that ultimately help the school to achieve better results overall! No subjects are easy, it's about the time and effort you put into it. I really think a varied subject base helped me, because I had skills in writing, science and performance which all helped me on my higher education and career path. Ultimately, I think you'll find your way, just do the best you can, find a way to enjoy education and to make the most of each subject. You will take on board so much more than just the curriculum - you learn so many skills having a varied subject base. I'd also say that picking one subject doesn't mean you'll get that job, e.g. if you take drama, you won't necessarily be an actor, if you take psychology you may not be a psychologist....you can get to wherever you want to get if you work hard and keep an open mind. For those reasons I'd definitely recommend a more practical based subject or two, and I'd recommend having a range of subjects, e.g. a science so that you can keep your options open, and build a broad foundation of adaptable skills.

If you have a story you'd like to share with us about how studying **Art, Music, Drama, PE, Textiles** or **Photography** at RPS has influenced your life since school, then please get in touch with m.garbutt@roundwoodpark.co.uk

If you would like to keep up to date with PE, Art, Drama and Music, please follow us on Twitter @

#RPSCREATIVE

#RPSPE

An Alumni writes in.



Sophie (nee Whitwood) Johnston (2005)-

As for myself - I am currently on maternity leave looking after my little boy Joseph who is now 2 months old. I work as a Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist in North London and am the owner of Stevenage Speech Therapy providing independent therapy services to families and schools. I support pre-school children with complex needs, as well as working in special needs schools. You can read the article that appeared in The Herts Advertiser (2/10/2018) on the Alumni News site.

Page | 5

Ed. We are always delighted to hear from all our alumni and it is reassuring to hear that all is well.

The 'staff' Interview

Mrs Kirsty Briggs

Sept 2001 – Dec 2006 &

Sept 2007 – March 2019

Teacher of English



1 Your students will have noticed your interesting accent and clear spoken delivery. What can you tell us about your early life?

Haha! Yes, imagine asking someone from NZ to teach students in England, English! Like so many others before me, after graduation I was keen to leave my beloved homeland and explore the other side of the world; I was only 23 when I first landed at Heathrow. However, when I started teaching in England, I needed to play a little game with myself. Every lesson, I pretended I was addressing the queen and in doing so managed to deliver most of my Ben/bin and pen/pins without too much confusion. However, it didn't always work, and I am sure there are lots of students who chuckled through my lessons as they heard me in all my Kiwi splendour.

2. What did you study at University – why that subject in particular?

I studied the history of music as part of a Bachelor of Music and English literature as part of a Bachelor of Arts. I was fortunate to have parents who firmly believed that you should do what you love most in life, even if the path beyond study is not immediately obvious. I never looked back.

Page | 6

3. Do you have any fond memories of your time at university?

Gosh yes! I studied at Wellington University (in NZ) and the city was full of musicians and writers. It really was an inspiring time.

4. What made you go into teaching?

First and foremost, my love of learning. I have always hoped that as a teacher I can help students find out more about themselves and the people and world around them. Learning happens every day in every way and I tend to think of it as the fuel that keeps us going. When you teach literature and language, you have the privilege of opening the eyes of students to ideas beyond their own existence. I just love encouraging open, developing minds.

5. Did you, or have you, ever considered any other career path?

Yes, when I first arrived in London, I worked for the Evening Standard newspaper. It was a whirlwind of a mini-career but in the end, dinners at the Dorchester didn't compare to the joy of working in the classroom. There is so much to be said for a job that not only pays the bills but also allows you to contribute to the community in which you live.

7. What aspects of your job at RPS did you especially enjoy and if you have to pick one thing that you enjoyed what would it have been?

Teacher planning sessions in the English department have often been like a trip to Disneyland for literature lovers. We would practically leap out of our seats with excitement when someone came up with an amazing link or way into a text. Needless to say, delivering the re-worked lessons was also a joy.

8. Rumour has it you have strong opinions about, and keen interest, in language. Can you tell us a little?

Well, basically, I wish I had the mind of Stephen Fry. The joy of language for me comes from so many things: its ability to tell a great story; the way it defines us in terms of accent or dialect, for example; how amazing it is to see children learn to use language and find their own way of expressing ideas and feelings; and, perhaps most significantly, how language, whether spoken or otherwise, enables us to connect with others.

9. Do you have any moments that stand out that you are willing to share about your experiences at RPS?

There was a wonderful moment in my first year at RPS when I told the class I had an announcement to make. One of the lively, but lovely boys in the second row piped up with, 'I knew it; you're pregnant!' I found this amusing because I was only announcing the fact that we were all going to enter a writing competition (and I didn't think I had particularly put on weight). However, the real amusement came when the girl, who sat next to Mr Lively-But-Lovely chastised him with, 'How dare you! Do you not realise that you NEVER say that to a lady?' It was wonderful!

10. Several Alumni have reported back that they were especially inspired by your enthusiasm and commitment. How important is it to have unrelenting passion for your subject?

Wow! I am flattered. I have always loved teaching and literature and I am delighted if that has come across. I guess, when you feel truly passionate about something, it just tumbles out of you and that is bound to have a positive impact on those around you. I am not sure you could enjoy this job if you lacked passion and drive.

11. Did you also take part in extra-curricular activities such as visits or sporting events with the students?

Yes, in my first 4 years at RPS I coached netball and loved it. In fact, the girls did rather well in the end but that definitely had more to do with their determination than my coaching ability! There have been many lovely RPS trips. Strangely, even standing in water in Wales with rulers on a Geography trip was rather enjoyable!

12. How do you feel you have made an impact in the teaching of English at RPS?

I am only a small cog in a huge, wonderful wheel. I hope that some of my lesson plans stand the test of time but most of all, I hope that students look back on their time in my English classroom, with a sense of accomplishment and enjoyment.

13. After your second spell back at RPS you are now pursuing other things. What are your plans?

Several years ago, I undertook additional post-graduate training to become a dyslexia specialist teacher. This is a bit of a turning point for me as going forward, I will be concentrating my time on one to one specialist teaching. Although I will miss a full, busy classroom, I am very excited about working with the inspiring, creative minds of young dyslexic students.

14. Do you enjoy many hobbies, pastimes or sporting activities when you are not working?

As a family, we travel a great deal and we are always hatching a plan for a new adventure. I love spending time with the family and my friends and am often seen walking through the lanes, putting the world to rights!

15. Given the changes in education over the years would you, given your time again, still go into teaching or into another profession?

Page | 8

Absolutely, 100%, yes! It is true, teaching is challenging at times but in my experience, nothing interesting is ever easy! Having said that, if I had to have a plan B, I would become a florist. I am not sure I would be very good at it but it must be wonderful to live in a world of flowers.

16. When students look back on their time at RPS how would you like to be remembered?

My mantra for teaching has always been to try to be fun, fair and firm (when necessary). I sincerely hope I managed that most of the time. However, I suspect I may be remembered as, 'that one from NZ who called Ben, Bin!'



If you do not wish to appear on our randomly selected GRAPEVINE section, please let us know. Equally if you would like to be featured here please let us know and also provide some information you would wish printed.



Kathryn Wood [2010]

Kathryn gained a BA in Modern Languages (French, German & Spanish) from Durham University. Kathryn, also a talented musician, worked as a music teacher and with orchestras as well as translation work. She is currently a freelance translator in London.

Bein



. Ashley Quirke-Tomlins [2006]

Ashley is currently a Senior Policy Advisor to the Government of Yukon in Canada. Ashley gained a BSc in Economics from the University of Wales in Aberystwyth. Then an MA in EU International Relations & Diplomacy from the College of Europe in Bruges. His career as a diplomat took him from several depts. in the the UK Civil Service to the British High Commission and moving to Canada in the Science & Innovation Network, which he headed before

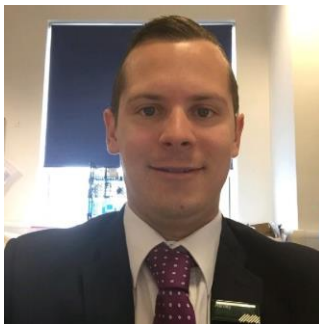
moving to his current position.

Page | 9



Saad Mohammed [2005]

Saad gained a BSc from Leeds University in Sports Science & Physiology and then an MA in Sports Management from Coventry University. Saad works for Sport 4 Life UK - a charity that changes the lives of Birmingham's most disadvantaged young people through the power of sport. He is currently the Research & Impact Manager.



Ashley Glover [2004]

After leaving RPS, Ashley went into the retail business.

He currently works as a Section Manager for the John Lewis Partnership.



Nick Trevis [2000]

Nick gained a BEng (hons) in Electrical Engineering with Management studies from the University of Nottingham.

He worked as an engineer, in accounts and then into IT consultancy in business management. He now works for KPMG and is currently a Senior Manager in KPMG's Management Consultancy practice in Canada.



Jo (nee Swift) Hacker [1996]

Jo graduated with a degree in Communications from Sheffield University.

She is a communications strategist with many years' experience in corporate brand reputation for some of the world's best-known brands. Jo currently works as the Chief Integration Officer at BCW Global.

Page | 10



Jordan Smith [1995]

After graduating from Leeds University with a degree in History, Jordan went into the world of commerce and communications. He is currently a Director at Sempervox in Leicester.



Francesca Wallis [2006]

Francesca Gained a BA from De Montfort University before embarking on a career in Business Relations. She is currently the AV Manager at the Specialist Works in London.



Tristan Woods [1991]

Tristan is currently an Experienced Hire Recruitment Manager at PwC based in London. Tristan gained a BSc in Building Surveying from Liverpool John Moore's University before embarking on a career in recruitment consultancy.



Richard Wesley [1990]

Richard gained a BSc (hons) in Maths from Bristol University. His experience is in systems and analytics in the telecommunications business, having senior and managerial positions with many of the

mobile phone operators. Currently he is with Vodafone in automation and analytics.

Matches section



Page | 11

Thanks for James Browning's news of his brother.

My brother, Will Browning (class of '10) married Harriet Cook (now Browning, class of '11) in July this year. Will, working for Diageo, and Harriet, a pediatric nurse are living happily in St Albans with their rescue dog Molly.

If you recently got married – do please send a phot and brief details.



Letters to the editors

We are always pleased to hear from you and hope to publish and respond to all comments.

- 1. "Shame about the hockey pitches. England really needs to develop the sport after being utterly trounced in the finals this year..." - HSL** *Yes I could not agree with you more as it is a badly needed facility in Harpenden.*
- 2. "Such a shame the school pitch couldn't be used for hockey too! Three comprehensive schools not to mention junior and infants' schools, two hockey clubs with a long tradition and successful, yet no hockey pitch in a town the size and wealth of Harpenden! "- RM** *Quite!*
- 3. "First I want to thank you for these fantastic newsletters - genuinely the best email I receive each month". JB.** *I am slightly embarrassed to print this but lovely to hear this all the same. Thank you.*

4. **"Hello I wondered where I might find pictures during the years 1973-80. I started at Roundwood in 1973. I live in America now. Please let me know where I might access them if any exist" – JM.** *A tough question but maybe our more senior alumni can help here?*
5. **"A few of us who held a successful reunion some 18 years ago, are holding another one and we would welcome your help in spreading the word" –IL.** *As always we will help where we can but it would be nice to hear back from such reunions with alumni that we are so far not in contact with.*
6. **I swapped addresses late last year in a rush and forgot to update you, sorry about that! - LR.** *Thank you so much for keep us updated with changes in contact details. If only more would do this.*

Page | 12

FUND RAISING continues.

RPS continues to seek funding for the all-weather pitch.

www.rpcp.co.uk - Roundwood Park Community Pitch



As donations are received it is no longer possible to identify donations from alumni and as such can no longer be mentioned on the web site.

However, all donations will receive a personal thanks from our Business Manager.

Any level of donation is gratefully received and a small monthly Direct Debit is possible.

Staff changes



Richard Botten (2008- 2019) A stalwart in ICT Support department being responsible for the school web site maintenance and the School's Learning Platform left at the end of January

STOP PRESS

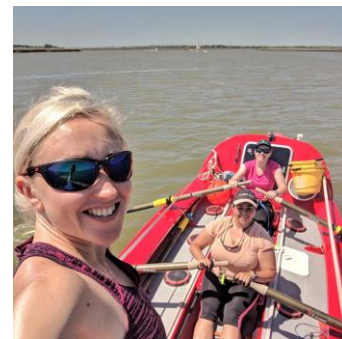


Byron Mackenzie is now flying planes for British Airways out of Gatwick, so look out for Captain Mackenzie next time you fly BA. You may also see captain Richard Sparshoot who also flies BA out of Heathrow according to Byron. NB. Another alumnus, Captain Brian Love is also a commercial airline pilot for Easyjet flying out of Luton.

Caroline Wilson writes on 20th Feb 2019.

Sorry for the delayed response, I didn't have access to my emails at sea.

We made it to dry land on Monday 18th February! It's been quite a whirlwind since then however we're still doing lots of publicity and would be grateful for any help spreading the message far and wide!



Our website has a blog that we updated whilst we were at sea that we think makes for a good read www.statusrow.com/blog



Electronic notification tells us that Tim Chisnall (class of 2011) is alive and well but braving the elements in Edinburgh or 'auld reekie' as the Scots call it.

Page | 14

Similarly Rebecca Howell (class of 1999), qualified as a veterinary surgeon and is currently working as a locum vet.



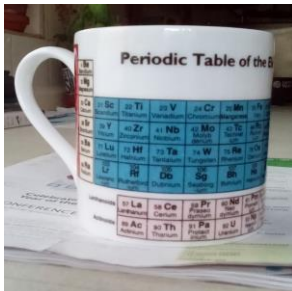
Former Harpenden Town FC footballer and prolific goal scorer, James Ewington (Class of 2008) has moved to St Albans City FC. Read more on Alumni news.



CONTACT – Your news and views are greatly appreciated. Please continue to send in articles and photographs.

Please contact us to BE ADDED to our / your Alumni Listings or to UPDATE your existing profile.

PLEASE email us with a synopsis of what you would like to appear along with a photo (linkedin?) Please email b.smith@roundwoodpark.co.



Here's wishing for a positive outcome & future for the UK.

Ed
BMLS

Thanks Lucy!

Apologies for the following page (an indulgence!) Once a chemist always a

