



ROUNDWOOD PARK ALUMNI

Newsletter 34: June 2021

4www

www.roundwoodpark.co.uk/alumni



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PLEASE forward this newsletter to ex-Roundwood friends and encourage them to make contact to be added to our mailing list.

Editorial comment

The school continues to take government advice and to provide as safe an environment and as effective a learning facility as possible. The current MP, Mr Bim Afolami, has written to extend his thanks and best wishes for all the sterling work the staff have provided and endured during this difficult time.

Contact - help us to keep in touch!

As circumstances change we would wish that all our alumni remain healthy and able to cope under these extended and difficult times.

We are keen to keep in touch with as many of our alumni as possible but as circumstances change so do email addresses. **PLEASE** keep us apprised of any contact details that change. Simply update your LinkedIn profiles or email: b.smith@roundwoodpark.co.uk

CAN YOU HELP PLEASE?



On 5th July we are holding a careers day for Year 12 and would love to find someone who has followed the apprenticeship route to speak to the students about their experience. Anyone who left in the last few years and who might be willing to help would be greatly appreciated.

If you are able to come in and help on this day

PLEASE contact Ms Jennie Hall in the Sixth Form office on j.hall@roundwoodpark.co.uk

Alumni in the News

Sarah McKenna was again on international duty for the England Women's rugby international in April when England won the Women's Six Nations for the third year in a row with a hard-fought final, 10-6, win against France. The 'Red Roses' won the Women's Six Nations for third year in a row



alamy stock photo

Watch highlights

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/rugby-union/56871392>

Sarah's efforts were reported in the BBC match report.

"France had different ideas and continued to apply pressure, forcing errors from their opponents and first scrum-half Leanne Riley then full-back **Sarah McKenna** dropped high balls to give the visitors prime attacking opportunities".

"Nerves continued to show as England fly-half Helena Rowland, whose boot had been flawless in the first half, missed a kick to touch and **McKenna** kicked the ball out on the full."

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Do you have a story to tell?

Events across the globe will have a varying impact as a result of current affairs and perhaps your own personal experiences relating to these. WE would truly like to learn of your experience especially those living in other countries. Given the constraints of GDPR we would welcome any photos.

Mr Ian Fisher – memories of an outstanding teacher.



I am Ian Fisher's youngest daughter, Naomi, and attended Roundwood Park School along with my sister Rebecca while Dad was teaching there.

I just want to add, for any there who still remember Dad, that teaching at RPS were the happiest years of his life and although he died shortly after he retired he always spoke very fondly of his friends, colleagues and the memories he made there.

Having spoken to my sister we seem to think Dad started with RPS around 1990 and retired in 2001 before passing in 2002. He did enjoy cycling in his younger years but that changed to a love of motorcycles in later life and he rode his motorbike and sidecar to work every day come rain or shine.

He was a very characterful man who always tried to make his classes fun and interesting and make the kids laugh while they learned. He always wore a smart suit to work and was well known for his extensive and interesting tie collection, by the time he retired he had a different tie for every school day of the year, many of them featuring Marilyn Monroe or Bugs Bunny! He was also very good friends with Conner Gerrity, I was sad to see in the listings that he had also passed away, after Dad's death we lost touch with Connor's family so I wasn't aware of that.

I am Ian Fisher's youngest daughter and attended Roundwood Park School along with my sister Rebecca while Dad was teaching there. I sadly don't have many photos of him as my photos were lost but I do have the one I have attached and although the quality is poor you are very welcome to use it if it is suitable.

Thanks to Ian's daughter, Naomi, for this information about Ian.

The STAFF INTERVIEW

Matthew Hunter

Head of PE. Sept 2005 – present.



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1. What did you study at University/College – why that subject in particular?

I studied a combined-honours in Sports Studies and Psychology. I'd always been a keen sports person and as I approached university, I'd become interested in the psychological aspect of sport performance. I think at the time, I had aspirations of becoming a sports psychologist and saw this as the best way to go. As my school hadn't offered A-level psychology, this was a little bit of a leap, but one I was keen to take.

2. Do you have any fond memories of your time at University/college?

I have fond(ish) memories – I worked hard while I was there. Having come from a family who didn't have loads of disposable income, I knew that me going to university was going to be fairly challenging financially. My parents would always do everything they could to support me, but I was very conscious of the fact that I wouldn't be going there just to enjoy myself. I wanted to take a decent level degree away with me and this acted as a major driver. While I played rugby, met some good people and generated some good memories, the main thing I took away from the university experience was a degree result that showed I'd been at the peak of my powers.

3. What made you go into teaching?

I'd always felt that teaching wasn't for me, as I hadn't loved most of the teachers I'd had and don't recall school being that amazing. As I went through my university course, I was certain that I wouldn't want to look at jobs that I could have done without the degree. What a waste of time and money that would have been. So, I concentrated on graduate style jobs...and kept returning to teaching. I'd always been involved in coaching, summer camps and other loosely related roles, so I actually had some relevant experience to look at PGCE courses in PE teaching. Eventually, I stopped worrying about what school had been like for me and decided that it was a career with huge rewards that I'd almost certainly enjoy.

4. Have you ever considered any other career path?

Not since I came into teaching. Although I do worry how I'll run about when I'm 60+, so that's something I need to keep considering.

As I went through secondary school, I liked the idea of physiotherapy, but wasn't, at that stage, in the position to get the required grades. Going to university, the sports psychologist option was one that I liked, but I quickly realised that there were loads of people applying for a very small number of jobs in that field and I knew that after university, I would need to get a job fairly quickly and be in position to be self-sufficient financially.

5. Why did you choose Roundwood Park School?

Having gone for an interview at another school which I didn't get (thankfully), I applied for RPS as I knew that had the levels of extra-curricular sport that I wanted and could see that it was a high achieving school, where I'd be able to develop as a professional without having to manage mass behaviour problems. Fortunately, I was offered the job.

6. What aspects of your job at RPS do you especially enjoy and if you had to pick one memory from your time at the school, what would it be?

The extra-curricular sport has provided me with many great memories. We've gone to some great places and been involved in great games. I feel like I've been able to get to know some brilliant students and hopefully helped them to remember school fondly. If I had to pick one memory, it would be a tight choice between... Euan Stewart kicking a penalty against St Georges with the final kick to claim victory a few years back, or the whole day in Birmingham at Bishop Stortford Hospital School. With a very good side captained by Jim Speirs, we ran a big private school very very close in a round 4 match in the old Daily Mail Cup.

7. How do you feel you have made an impact at RPS in any of your roles at RPS?

As a form tutor I'd like to think that I've impacted some people on a personal level. I've always felt privileged to be able to support students and be their main contact at school. This is a part of my job that I've loved over the years. I've been very lucky with some amazing tutees.

As Head of Grey-Thompson house, when it was first formed, I would like to think that I played a part in shaping what that house would look like moving forward and got the ball rolling with some innovative charity ideas.

As Head of PE, I hope that I've impacted the school through clear vision, joined up thinking and a thirst for improvement in students both academically and practically. I'd like to think that I have high standards and hope that students gain confidence from their work with us and understand how capable they can be if they put their minds to it and allow us to push them.

8. You are clearly a keen sportsman. What sports have you enjoyed and do you still play any?

As a young man, I played rugby through the winter and cricket though the summer. Although I was a late starter and didn't join local clubs (outside school) until around 13, I took so much from both. By 16, I was playing adult sport and gathered so much (good and bad) from the people I got to play with. As the teaching career took over, I found I had less time...and then there were the injuries. Multiple arm breaks, a few concussions, a ruptured ACL and two torn menisci basically meant that playing sport at any kind of level wasn't really possible anymore.

9. Besides sports do you have any other hobbies or pursuits in your spare time?

I like to spend time in the garden when I can. I'm a fan of a good lawn!

I've also authored some GCSE PE text books in recent years and written associated articles and the like, so that's kept me pretty busy. I've had good feedback on them and know that my books are in schools across the country and in some international schools abroad, so the time I invested in all of that feels well spent.

As I've now got two children under three –personal hobbies are basically a thing of the past.

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

I think I would go into it again. Although, I know lots of people who appear to have more spare time and who drive nicer cars and go on better holidays, so if I was doing it all again – I would probably consider those things more than I did. That said, a lot of those people don't laugh every day and don't have people shouting "Hunter" at them in pubs when they see you and remind you that you taught them PE a decade ago.

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

I would like students to remember me as hard working, knowledgeable, caring and perhaps entertaining. I'd basically want people to think that I did things right and that me being there was good for the school and good for the majority of young people I worked with.

Future Staff Interviews. Let us know if there is a particular teacher you would like to read about.

Staff News?

If you would like to find out any information about any teacher/member of staff, then please go to alumni/staff news on the school website. This information is patchy on staff that left many years ago and we would welcome any information regarding incorrect or missing members.

General RPS information

More RPS news can be found on the fortnightly 'Roundup' newsletter on the school website <https://roundwoodpark.co.uk/roundup-newsletters/>



Letters to the Editor

1. I'd also very much to visit the school later this year when on-site visits are reinstated; it would be great to see how Roundwood has changed and grown over the years and to see which of my brilliant teachers, if any, might still be around. AC. *I agree and I am sure they would be delighted to see you again.*
2. Really hope you can get back into school in the near future. I'd love to visit one day soon. I had offered to return to give a talk on careers but sadly it had to be cancelled because of COVID. PK. *Hopefully visits can resume soon and your kind offer taken up.*
3. I am Ian Fisher's youngest daughter...NF. *Thanks for making contact and for the above info.*
4. I wanted to reach out simply to say that I have thought of my school days fondly very often this past year and I've been meaning to drop you an email for a very long time. I've no idea whether or not this will be of interest, but I wanted to offer to give back to the school in some way – whether through giving a talk or offering some insight into the working world and the future of media to interested students, or even helping to mentor some students somehow. AC

5. Roy Patterson. Now there is a teacher I Will remember for ever. Explaining algebra as elephants and giraffes, small ones mind as they wouldn't fit in the classroom. His words, and they stick in my mind today, some 40 years on. Another was how calculus had to be done systematically. He then proceeded how to take a bren gun apart and put it back together. Again I remember calculus for this reason. SE
6. Did you receive my email from December 2020? Just wondering about the feasibility of some form of reunion at the school for our year who are our turn 50 this year. JL.
Apologies for my tardiness and under current circumstances such gatherings seem risky alas.
7. I Many thanks for your email and newsletter. I have been designing and making porcelain jewellery pendants and cufflinks; as well as doing all the housework, cooking, baking etc.SM
8. passed my newsletter to my mother and she asked to ne added to the mailing list. CD.
9. Please add my sister and brother to the Alumni mailing list with the following email s. PK.
Certainly! We are always keen to spread the net and make contact with as many alumni as we can. Hopefully more like this please.
10. Love these Dr Smith! ME. Such a sweet comment-thanks.
11. Just thought I should let you know that I met a lovely lady on Friday. She wanted to donate some art books to the school. Her son apparently came over but 'he is now 61'. She gave me a list of names of his friends that stayed in touch and still meet up. Michael Graham - her son - now runs a carbon fibre company in Portland Oregon, Gavin Bright, Nick Bishop, Ian Lynch & Paul Watkinson. They were the class of 1978. *RPS Librarian.*

Staff changes

Mrs Claire Smith, Receptionist, (Jan 2014 - April 2021).

Mrs Samantha Greatrex, **Catering Assistant**, (April 2018 - April 2021).

Mrs Karin Barton, **Database & Admissions Secretary**, (June 2013 - April 2021).

Mr Dermot Kelly, **Caretaker**, (Oct 2020 – May 2021)

Ms Katie Rawcliffe, **D&T technician**, (Sept 2020- Jun 2021).

Mrs Jessica Dann, **Catering Assistant**. (July 2019- June 2021)

Ms Eszta Kosa, **Assistant Librarian**. (Nov 2018- June 2021)

Alan Holmes, **Caretaker**, joined the school on 24 November 2004 and will be leaving us on 20 July 2021. Truly a Mr Fixit who could turn his hand to any practical challenge.

Kate Frost, **Learning Support Assistant**, joined the school on 12 November 2012 and will be leaving us on 21 July 2021.

Hugh Roberts, **Learning Support Assistant**, joined the school on 18 November 2020 and will be leaving us on 21 July 2021.

Yin Ying, **Teacher of Maths**, joined the school on 01 September 2020 and will be leaving us on 31 August 2021.

Natalie Bamford, Teacher of PE, joined the school on 02 November 2020 and will be leaving us on 31 August 2021.

Gemma Gill, Teacher of PRE, joined the school on 01 September 2003 and will be leaving us on 31 August 2021.

Cate Brown, Teacher of English, joined the school on 01 September 2018 and will be leaving us on 31 August 2021.

Katherine Sunderland, Teacher of English, joined the school on 01 January 2020 and will be leaving us on 31 August 2021.



Mr Paul Barnett. Joined in September 1978. After 40+ years in the saddle of the old Roundwood nag, Paul Robert Barnett, has finally decided to hang up his whiteboard markers. Despite his immense contributions to science teaching and being a form tutor, he also regularly organised Grand National / World cup Quiz raffles for the staff. His impact on so many was considerable.

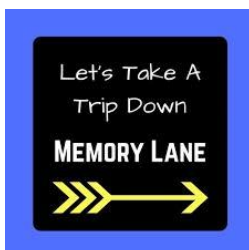
Mrs Colleen Halliday. (2002-21). A long-standing stalwart of the Science dept who provided the right chemistry for many successful tears and guided so many students to achieve the best they could not only as a chemistry teacher but as a form tutor. A hard working and super conscientious individual who will be missed by all that she taught and guided as well as her colleagues.



Mr Kirk Dumpleton, Teacher of History, joined the school on 01 January 1994 and will be leaving us on 31 August 2021. Another long serving and very popular senior member of staff. Always remembered for his athletic prowess when beating both Seb Coe and Steve Ovett in a race in his youth.

FEEDBACK. If you would like to convey any comments/appreciation about any of the above mention staff ; please email in and you comments will be passed on.

WEDNESDAY VISITS



Hopefully conditions will prevail which will enable us to return to a sense of normality and welcome alumni back to take a trip down memory lane to see the changes that have occurred since they left and the people and places/things they remember.

STOP PRESS or latest News



PLEASE send in any information relating to your time with us or your recent news. The news & views you provide, along with any photos, are greatly appreciated by all our readers.

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



A gift to remember.

Thanks to all those in 13Sm/BSm 2004 and I wonder what they are all doing now or where they are?

What more could a chemist need than a series of reactions producing delightfully tasty products!

BMAS (Editor)