



ROUNDWOOD PARK ALUMNI Newsletter 39: September 2022

www.roundwoodpark.co.uk/alumni



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

Editorial comment- contact

PLEASE ensure we have your current email address.

PLEASE encourage fellow ex-RPS students (alumni) to get in touch.

Please give us your feedback on any items contained within or if you wish on any topic that relates to your time here or fellow classmates or staff.

alumnioffice@roundwoodpark.co.uk or b.smith@roundwoodpark.co.uk

Security update



Over the summer recess, Roundwood, like many other school and educational establishments has reviewed perimeter security with new fencing and security gates plus a new road layout for incoming/outgoing traffic.



What is happening in school – 2 publications are available on the RPS website. Roundup (twice weekly) and Park Times (see below)

<https://roundwoodpark.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Park-Times-July-2022.pdf>

It is with great sadness we must report the death of Mrs Betty Wolfenden, 5th March 1930 – 30th July 2022.



Betty was known to the many students that she taught maths to during her time at Roundwood Park during to 80s. Fiercely academic and one who strove for the highest standards in her students and maths homework always took priority. Betty was dynamic and enthusiastic about so many areas and was a stickler for accuracy and precision. She had many hobbies, a keen cyclist and a great organiser, involved in many organisations connected to education. Her husband, Kieth, preseded her and they were buried in Westfiled Cemetery on Friday 26th August. She will be sadly missed by so many and leaves two daughters and a son Tim (alumnus).).

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

Athletics.

“ Many may remember the brilliant **Mia McIntosh**, who left us last summer (2021). She now studies at Oaklands and is prioritising her athletics. As anticipated, her sprint hurdles success has continued. She travelled to race in Switzerland, where she ran a new PB which puts her No. 1 in the UK under 18 and under 20 rankings (She is 17 ½ !)...this would put her No. 4 in the world as an U18.



A video of the race is on our twitter feed:

<https://twitter.com/rpspe?lang=en>



She now plans to attend the European U18 championships and also the U18 world championships.

Latest: Mia McIntosh is now U18 European 100m hurdles champion. Our golden girl. She broke another British record while running in a Great Britain vest this evening.

https://twitter.com/britathletics/status/1544363706645086208?s=21&t=FFiAKMtVh_GnHrb3NF0I7A

Thank to Mr Hunter for this .

.An inspector call.....

As part of our  PRIDE Month  celebrations we were absolutely delighted to welcome, Alumnus class of 2006, Chief Inspector Steve Alison, Chair of Herts Police LGBT+ Network, and Police Constable Toby George, LGBT+ Liaison Officer, in to school today. Not only did they talk to us about the fantastic work the Herts Police LGBT+ Network is doing, and the role of their LGBT+ Liaison Officers, but they also shared their own stories. Empowering and inspiring, thank you so much for coming to talk to us 🙏



Chief Inspector Steve Alison is top right in main picture above.

Read the lecture below.



School Talk Steve
Alison.pptx

Revelations! Scanning websites can be informative and surprising. I was surprised to see one of my photos of 6Sm showing sixth formers from 1984/85! Click below to read the school history and that class photo.

<https://roundwoodpark.co.uk/a-brief-history/>

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

*In the past the Newsletter has featured an 'alumni of the month of issue' to showcase the range of career **direction and locations** that our alumni have **pursued since leaving us.***

Please write to us!

We would welcome content and a photo from any of our alumni on whatever they choose to write about Discover the school website!

The STAFF INTERVIEW

The staff interview:

MRS JO JOHN; Teacher of English, Second in Dept., 2006 -present.

1. Rumour has it you are a local 'girl' and attended Roundwood Park school and maybe also Roundwood Primary? If so do you have favourable recollections?

It's funny you think that. I'm most definitely not! I feel like I am RPS through and through because I have been here so long, but I am actually from Cheshire. I temporarily moved to the USA back in 2005 with my husband so that he could learn a new role and they placed him in London in 2006. We took one look at Harpenden and knew we wanted to raise our family here. So, no, not a local by birth, but I certainly picked this place out of anywhere on a map. Working for so long in the local school has certainly given me a sense of belonging and loyalty to this town, (even if you all speak strangely!)



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

I studied, wait for it – Interdisciplinary Human Studies at University. I know, I didn't know what it was either! It meant that I could specialise in English Literature and Psychology in my final year. It was a very varied course that explored Philosophy,

Sociology, Literature and Psychology. It was pretty cool actually. I suspect I picked the course because everyone there was wearing Doc Martens – that was where I belonged. Looking back, I wish I had been more discerning and selected a course more Literature based for the whole three years, but it definitely gave me a breadth of knowledge that I still draw on to this day when approaching literature.

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

If I'm really honest, no, not really. I met my husband just before I went to University and I found three years away from him really challenging. Don't get me wrong, we had a lot of fun and a lot of alcohol and a lot of wild nights out, but I think I was such a home bird that the separation was tough to live with. Plus, the fact I went to Bradford, and that city was a real shock to my Cheshire leafy suburb younger self.

I am extremely grateful for my education – I was the first in my family to get a degree, and my parents' pride was highly motivating. They made a lot of sacrifices to put me there, but University wasn't what I thought it would be. Perhaps I could have taken more time to work out what would have suited me better. I have since moved both of my kids to University cities and found them wildly exciting, so selecting where you study is vital I think.

4. Have you ever considered any other career path or worked in another industry?

I used to teach people how to use computer software: Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Word etc. I loved it. I was employed by a computer training company and I was sent all around the country to deliver courses in all sort of business. I worked for Reebok, BBC, McDonald and millions of other companies across the North West. That was where I realised that I love the act of 'teaching'. I

hated the travelling (my 'home bird' roots showing themselves again) but teaching was incredible. It really lit a fire in me.

5. What made you go into teaching and to teach English?

I knew I loved teaching because of my IT role. I thought about teaching in schools when I decided I wanted a family. It was a way of combining the teaching with my absolute obsession with reading. It was a no brainer to be honest. I lived near Manchester University at the time and I saw they had a part time course I could do. I remember applying for the course whilst my new born son was in hospital.

6. Why did you choose Roundwood Park School and have you ever worked in another school?

So I am standing on a rugby pitch watching my 4yr old son play tag rugby (in a town where I know nobody) and there is this fella stood next to me in a baseball cap also watching his young child play tag. My husband gets chatting to him and it turns out he works for St Georges. This fella organises for me to have an interview at St Georges, knowing full well that there were no jobs, but wanting to help my CV and employability. I turn up and love it. Within a week the then head teacher at RPS calls me up and offers me an interview at RPS. My 'fairy Godmother' fella in the baseball cap was Mr. Pettengell! He then went on to become my boss!

I did leave. I managed a term. The less we say about that the better! There is no place like RPS. It's all about quality here.

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

This is so simple. It's the students. They make me laugh every day. I love their energy and their questions and the challenges they

give me. I love my subject and I love that the people I work with are constantly supportive and reflective and never stay still academically. It makes me proud when I'm out and about and people ask me where I work.

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

I have my favourites, obviously, but I will never say who they are! All our students are special to us. I am so privileged to be part of so many student's childhoods.

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

How could I ever answer that? I hope that one day a student will look back and remember their time with us fondly. I hope they felt valued and confident and most of all, I hope they pick up a novel one day and remember that that English teacher they had way back recommended this – and she was right, it IS a banger!

10. What are your passions/hobbies or pursuits in your spare time?

I hate this question! I spend my free time reading, marking, planning and emptying a dishwasher! I suppose I could count dreadfully slow jogging and gardening to this exciting list, and perhaps drinking red wine and travelling when the time allows. I split my home life between Cheshire and Harpenden so I could even count queuing on the M6 a hobby too!

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

I would definitely stay in teaching. I may moan and whine, but I wouldn't change my job for the world. I cannot imagine doing anything else.

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

I fully understand that I am not in control of this, but I hope any student who has passed through my door knows I cared deeply about them. I wanted them to feel cherished and valued in my classroom. I wanted them to enjoy their childhood and the time they had at school, even if they didn't love my subject. I hope that is my impact.

General RPS information

More RPS news can be found on the fortnightly and now new look 'Roundup' newsletter on the school website



Letters to the Editor

1. Brilliant - thanks so much for sharing this. So great to hear what some of the Alumni are up to - and especially that we have some sporting stars making waves around the globe. Hope you and your wife are keeping well. CC.
Such a pleasure to hear from distant alumni that one has fond memories of and to know they are keeping well and enjoying life
2. Still living out here in Sydney and very much fed up with all this rain. Similar to when the fires happened, my area is managing ok - we've been declared a disaster area but more due to the number of trees etc falling over from wet ground / winds. My particular suburb is safe, thankfully! I think we may be over the worst of it for now but it's really been a terrible year for rain - we certainly are on the frontline of climate change! FD. Relieved to hear you are safe.
3. I've been ok and most of my friends have been fine. Sydney is fairly hilly in the more populated areas, but this living closest to rivers/reservoirs have been impacted. Hopefully ends soon - it's not been a great few years, wildfires, covid and then the wettest year! Hopefully next year we get some decent weather again! MG. *Another safe from climate change in Oz.*

4. Hello! We got hit by the last bit of flooding which was awful. We seemed to have missed it this time... fingers crossed it doesn't get worse.CC. *We hope so too!*

Staff changes . 18 members of staff left at the end of the summer term..

David Keenleyside, Teacher of PE, joined the school on 07 July 2014.
Emma Tully, Teacher of Maths, joined the school on 01 September 2017.
Louise James, Teacher of Science, joined the school on 01 September 2014.
Martina Mansfield, Assistant Headteacher, joined the school on 01 September 2014.



Helen Twomey, Teacher of MFL, joined the school on 01 September 2004.
Emma Morton, Teacher of Geography, joined the school on 01 September 2021.
Sarah Pimm, Teacher of MFL, joined the school on 01 September 2017.
Anne Bentley, Teacher of Science, joined the school on 01 September 2008.
Bill Whitmore, Teacher of Science and HOY11, joined the school on 20 September.
Mel Chrisp, Teacher of Maths, joined the school on 01 September 2012.

Emma Gardner, Teacher of Science, joined the school on 01 September 2019 as a trainee and on 3 July 2020 as a teacher.

Rob Mercel, Teacher of Music/Photography and HOY13, joined the school on 01 September 2014

Clare Atkin, Teacher of Maths (Deputy Head of Maths), joined the school on 05 July 2019

Emma Clegg, Teacher of Maths, joined the school on 08 June 2015

Jenny Hartley, Timetable and Assessment Coordinator, joined the school on 01 November 2000 and will be leaving us in summer 2022 (exact leaving date TBC).

Ana Lopez, Maths teacher; joined in 2008.

Mrs Catherine Croft, Assistant Finance Office, joined in April 2006.

Mrs Beata Krol, Maths teacher, joined in September 2015.



WEDNESDAY VISITS

Currently there are no restrictions concerning Covid-19.

Should you wish to visit please contact us.

Mask wearing is a matter of personal choice..

If you would like to visit please email me and I will see what we can arrange.

STOP PRESS Nothing to report



Any comments/memories/photos (GDPR?) of your time with us or your recent news will be greatly appreciated by all our readers.



**Best wishes to
all our readers**

BMLS
(editor)