



ROUNDWOOD PARK ALUMNI Newsletter 40: December 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

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

HMV writes...

We wanted to share the exciting news that Roundwood Park leaver **India Arkin** (2017?) has been signed onto HMV's new record label. India is an indie singer songwriter and also creates all album art. If you wanted a comment or photo for the school please let us know. All support to celebrate this achievement from her roots and early inspiration as an artist whilst a student in Harpenden is welcomed.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/sep/22/hmv-vinyl-label-1921-records-india-arkin>

A chance encounter!

Whilst listening to a radio drama, **Jaimi Barbakoff** was mentioned in the credits.

I recall the name and perhaps the person in the picture but is this the Jaimi that is one of our 'multitalented' alumni?

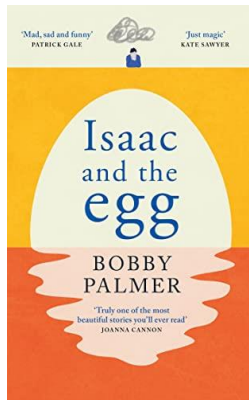
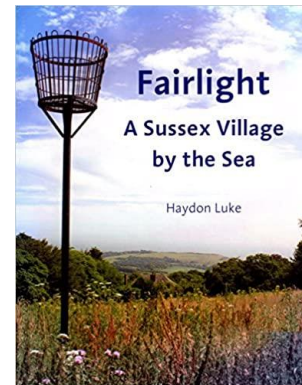
Do you recognize Jaimi and if so which year



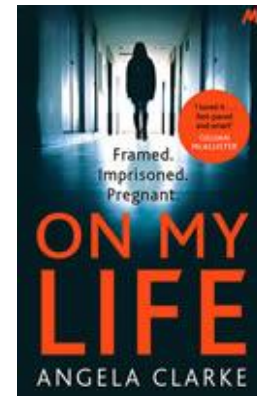
Roundwood Writes.

Haydon Luke, ex-Headteacher (1980-97), had many interests that he pursued avidly and as a local historian he wrote 'Fairlight' in 2014.

'Fairlight and the Smugglers': a talk by Haydon Luke.
Saturday 20 November 2021, 11:00 - 12:00
A talk given at Friends of Hastings Country Park Nature Reserve.



Bobby Palmer (class of 2011) has recently published 'Isaac and the egg' and did a book signing at Harpenden Books in mid-October.



Angela Clarke (class of 1998) is a screenwriter and best-selling author. Her latest book is called 'On my life' – framed, imprisoned and pregnant.



Selin Hizli, (class of 2005), is an accomplished actress and is currently has a programme on BBC2 called 'Am I Being Unreasonable?' which is a comedy thriller about obsessive friendship, maternal paranoia – and a dead cat, written by and starring real-life best friends Selin Hizli and This Country's Daisy May Cooper. Nic (Cooper) is grieving a loss that she can't share with anyone and is unfulfilled in her marriage.

Do we have any more alumni or ex-staff that have written books, films or other media.? Please let us know.

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

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

We would be delighted to hear from any of alumni that would like to feature in the next or future editions of these alumni newsletters.

Previous 'alumni of the month' can be viewed on past Newsletters on the alumni site.

The STAFF INTERVIEW

Mrs Juliette (nee Keenor) Upton

Head of History
2004-present



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

I completed a BA Hons in History and Archaeology. I knew I wanted to study history and thought that archaeology would be an interesting course to study as well.

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

My fondest memories of university revolve around the friends I made. Friends I am still very close to today. I enjoyed my degree but the wide variety of modules meant that I didn't study with the same people across the 3 years.

3. What made you go into teaching?

I deliberately steered clear of immediately going into teaching once I had completed my degree. I wanted to see what other careers there were and not go into teaching because that was what was expected of me. After a couple of years working I decided to complete my PGCE as I was sure that teaching was the right profession.

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

Oh yes. While I love teaching the amount of work that I have to do in the evenings and weekends mean I often consider leaving the profession.

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

My first teaching job was in a rural school in Uckfield. I was there for a couple of years but then moved in with an ex-partner in Enfield. To commute was not feasible so I was lucky to get the job at Roundwood.

6. 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?

Teaching students (even those uninterested in history) is very rewarding. To see students improve in their historical knowledge and skills makes me feel very proud. Teaching A level history is also deeply rewarding as you can share your love for learning with students at a much deeper and less superficial level.

The one thing I have most enjoyed about Roundwood has been working with my department. Over the years I have been very lucky to work with dedicated, professional and passionate colleagues who have both challenged and supported me in my career. Some have become dear friends.

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

There are so many experiences that I could share. Some revolve around a lack of understanding of “current slang” which have led to some amusing and confusing conversations; who knows what “Phat” means.

I also often smile over the memory of a retired Psychology teacher shouting down the corridor, after a retreating student, that they needed to come back so she could “debrief” them.

Others concern the fun and games of school residential trips and trying to keep students in their beds. My favourite Battlefields memory was one night when the French security guard told Mr Dumbleton that some bedroom windows on the ground floor were open and that they should be closed. Rather than going to the student’s rooms and knocking on their doors Mr Dumbleton went outside in the dark and started knocking on their windows. To say we had some scared students was an understatement.

Some memories I will keep to myself....

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

That’s a tough question. I could talk about exam results and student success stories but at the end of the day I am not sure what impact I have had. I hope that it has been a mostly positive one, that I engaged students in most of my lessons and that I am considered to be a teacher willing to help and support students.

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

Before I had my daughter I went on lots of weekend walks with my husband. We did pub quizzes and went to the cinema. Now I have my 6 month old and everything revolves around her.

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

It makes me sad to say that I would probably not go into teaching if I had my time again. The profession is no longer respected and it does make me sad to hear such negative comments about teaching.

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

Firm but fair, approachable and willing to listen.

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. So sorry to hear about Betty Wolfenden. I have so much to thank her for - she took apart a lot of my maths knowledge and built it again with rigour. I didn't like it initially (I thought, why am I being taught the basics again) but soon realisedJG. Yes. *Betty was a giant at RPS.*
2. *Love the regular updates, although they make me feel very old! My son is doing chemistry GCSE, so I think about you often as I remind myself how to calculate atomic mass. Good times. Education is definitely wasted on the young. BG. Fond memories.*



Head Boy & Head Girl records

Our records show a number of omissions for the period that the school has been open since the early 60s. Can you help fill some gaps or correct errors?

<https://roundwoodpark.co.uk/head-boy-head-girl-past-present/>

Missing

88/89, 87/88, 81/82, 80/81, 79/80, 76/77 HB? Tracey Seabrook HG, 74/75, 72/73 HB? Susan Johnson HG, 70/71, 69/70 HB? Carol Fox HG, 68/69 Andrew Bolton HB, HG?, 67/68, 66/67, 65/66, 63/64 HG? / Ray O'Dell HB, 62/63, 61/62, 60/61 HB Christopher Woof, HG?.

WEDNESDAY VISITS



Professor Jordan Giddings (class of 1985) and his old tutor Dr Brian Smith (1981-2011) enjoyed a timely reunion and a welcomed tour around Jordan's old school. He remarked how much it had changed but also how much was the same and he recounted many memories of staff gone past and events in various rooms and labs.

Currently there are no restrictions concerning Covid-19.

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

STOP PRESS



Warren Plowright (class of 2008) is alive and well and recently seen at a local hostelry. He is married to **Laura Wrigglesworth** (class of 2010) and they have two children and live in the county.

By chance at the same venue, Dr Smith met up with **Kaye Cartwright** (Head of Cookery teacher; 1984-87) to reminisce about old times at Roundwood Park and the general state of the planet!

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 at Christmas

BMLS (editor)

The tradition of creating these
intricate knitted covers for the
Post Boxes in Harpenden and
St Albans has continued and
has raised much needed funds
for charities.