



# Former Pupil e-News

## Former Pupil Club Report

This year has seen changes in the committee and much discussion of the role of the FP Club in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We were very sorry to lose our Vice President, Barbara Brown, who has moved to Vietnam with her husband for two years to teach in the British International School in Ho Chi Minh City. We are all most grateful for her hard work in establishing the club among Beaconhurst's former pupils and look forward to welcoming her back when she returns to Scotland. In the meantime, we are delighted to welcome some new young blood onto the Committee, namely Janette Dewhurst, Linsey McGregor and Alan Roughead.

Yvonne Horsfall-Turner hosted another very successful Reunion lunch in her home in London which was attended by Iain Kilpatrick and our staff representative Fiona Casey. Our sincere thanks to Yvonne for all her effort and hard work.

It has become apparent that the ladies, who were for many years faithful members of the Beacon Old Girls Club, are not really interested in becoming involved with the Beaconhurst FP Club. However they all appreciated still having a connection with the school and it is hoped they will continue to meet at Beaconhurst, London, Glasgow or wherever it suits.

The committee must look to the future of the Club and it has been suggested that the youngest FPs might like to link their events with events at school, such as Outdoor Education Week or the Expressive Arts production. They have already set up a Beaconhurst FP group on Facebook where they can exchange news and arrange informal get-togethers. As your President, I have fully endorsed these moves as we need to look to the future and build up the younger membership of the Club if we are to survive.

As usual, you are all invited to a Beaconhurst Lunch Reunion at 12.30pm on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October. Attendance at this event has steadily declined so that it is no longer viable without a minimum number of 20 guests. If you would like to attend, please let one of the committee or the school know by emailing: [secretary@beaconhurst.com](mailto:secretary@beaconhurst.com) by **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September** at the latest.

We very much hope to see you there. It is inspiring to see how much the school is progressing and it would give you the chance to see the refurbished Cameron Hall, including a very stylish lectern that the Club donated.

*Kate Jackson,*



## Facebook

The Former Pupils Club has enjoyed a successful foray into the world of social media. With nearly 200 former pupils joining within the first 48 hours, the 'Beaconhurst FPs' Facebook Group has proved extremely popular.

The Group enables FPs to maintain and rediscover friendships from their schooldays at Beaconhurst – a facility of which I am sure previous generations of FPs are extremely envious!

The Group is also intended to keep FPs up-to-date with all current news and events. The FP Committee are set imminently to publish details of upcoming social events through the Group and are equally keen to hear from FPs on what they would like to see the Club doing. So please feel free to join and see what is going on.

The group is accessed by logging into Facebook and simply searching for 'Beaconhurst FPs'.

*Alan Roughead*

## London FP weekend - Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2011



**Headmaster  
enjoying a catch up  
with the ladies**

The biennial meeting of the FP association at the beautiful Stone House was a great success. On a glorious sunny February day, the house of Mrs Yvonne Horsfall-Turner was opened up to the Beacon Old Girls, or “Bogs” as I learned they affectionately call themselves! The lunch was attended by ladies from all over the country, many of whom had travelled quite a distance for the lunch, and the Headmaster and I were lucky enough to receive an invitation in our capacity as representatives of the Beacons FP Club.

The lunch was delicious and the conversation flowed easily. The Headmaster was able to bring the ladies up to date on all the new developments with the school and there was great interest in the slideshow of the newly refurbished Cameron Hall, a building which many at the event remembered being opened back in the 1960s.

It was a lovely day and I know I speak for everyone there when I thank Mrs Horsfall-Turner for her excellent food and brilliant hospitality.

*Fiona Casey*

## Class of '69

In May, Fiona Freshwater organised a very happy reunion of her class in the school in 1969. This is what she writes:

*We met at The Edinburgh Residence for a champagne tea, and as everyone arrived the years just fell away. We had plenty of class pictures to laugh about on the shelves of the library room which was a perfect venue for the 16 of us. Then we had a “rest” and reconvened again for a dinner. Considering some of us had an absence of 42 years, there was no shortage of conversation and we all thought we looked pretty good. We had a particular laugh when Mary brought out her blazer and scarf; I wore my prefect’s and house badges! There were quite a few bits of memorabilia: the elocution books, the programme and photos for our famous production of “Trouble in Helicon”, a few school magazines particularly as our last year was the Golden Jubilee year. We had greetings from a number of girls who couldn’t make it, so we are all going to be able to stay in touch thanks to the internet, and promise that the next reunion might be a little sooner than the gap we have had between our only two so far.*



## The Class of '69

Details of their news can be found within the attached pdf.

### The Opening of the Cameron Hall

Beaconhurst was delighted to host a visit from HRH The Earl of Wessex on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March. His Royal Highness spent over an hour speaking to pupils and staff and met most of the school community from Junior Start right up to Senior 6. He was particularly interested in meeting pupils currently involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, of which he is patron. Head Boy, Mungo Dewar and Head Girl, Amy MacKenzie, took the Earl on a tour of stands featuring pupils involved in the various activities associated with the award.

Following this, His Royal Highness officially opened the refurbished and extended Cameron Hall, unveiling a plaque and addressing the excited guests, pupils and staff. Gordon Murphy, Chairman of the Board of Governors, said, "We are pleased to breathe new life into the building that carries the name of one of the school's founders".

All in all, this was an excellent event and great honour for Beaconhurst as we were one of only two engagements that the Earl undertook in Stirling. It is a day that all those involved will remember for some time to come.



## OBITUARIES

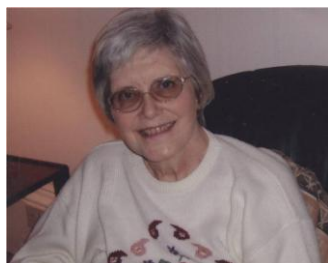
It is with regret that we announce the deaths of the following:

**Ishbel Buchanan** who lived at 8 Lomond Road, Bearsden, Glasgow who died on 7 February 2010,

**Anne Bain** (nee Knowles) who died September 2010, aged 74,

**Dierdrie Meffan** who died 16 July 2010, aged 51.

**Jill Stewart**



**Rachel Burke**

**Gillian Diana Stewart (nee Butchart)**

Jill died on 1 November 2009, aged 68, having battled cancer for 9 ½ years, having had a cerebral haemorrhage in 2005, TIA and cardiac arrest in 2007. Despite this, no one could have guessed, as she was unfailingly helpful to all, very active in the community and, more importantly, a most caring and loving wife, mother and grandmother.

It may surprise those who knew her to learn that she had her first date with Alan, on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1960 and she accepted his proposal of marriage exactly a week later on the 26<sup>th</sup> December. This was uncharacteristically impulsive, but never regretted by either of them!

Jill attended Beaconsfield School between 1949 – 1958. She is greatly missed by all.

### **RACHEL HELEN WILLIAMSON BURKE nee MACPHERSON (known as Rita at school) 1921 - 2011**

Rita was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1921 and lived in South America until at the age of 7 she was sent to The Beacon with her twin sister Betty, later moving to Lowther College in North Wales. The two girls travelled back and forth by ship, an experience which resulted in Rita's great love of all things to do with the sea. This led her, with Betty, at the start of the War to work in the British Naval Attaché's Office in Lisbon. Despite a life of sunshine, tennis and assistant spying, they chose to progress to the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and joined the WRNS, to the shock and dismay of their parents.

After postings in Oban, Greenock and Largs they were posted as Cipher Officers on the Staff of Mountbatten in India, travelling out by the requisitioned troop ship SS Marnix van St Aldegonde in a convoy. Whilst in the Mediterranean the convoy was attacked by a German dive bomber – the ship was torpedoed at six in the evening as they were dressing for dinner. Swimming in the water in evening dress, Rita gave her lifebelt to a nearby sailor and she and Betty shared Betty's lifebelt. They remained in the water with fellow passengers until they were picked up by an American destroyer and sailed to Libya.

Rita and Betty eventually arrived in India, after which Rita was posted to Ceylon where she met Bill, a young Flying Officer serving with a Catalina squadron. After VJ Day Rita and Bill returned to various UK postings and overseas, including Gibraltar and Norway. This was a lifestyle that Rita enjoyed and she contributed to the life of the RAF station and the local community.

On retirement to Argyll, an area she had known during school holidays, tennis continued with membership of Castle Tennis Club, Dunoon, and matches as far afield as Oban and Fortwilliam. Her involvement with the local community continued with membership of the SWRI, Kilmun Church Guild, the committee of Inverreck, WRVS Meals on Wheels and membership of the American and Holy Loch Ladies' Association. Rita loved picnics along Scottish loch sides and her life by the sea. She never went anywhere without a crossword puzzle, a book, preferably a biography, and a pair of binoculars for spying on ships and watching birds.

Rita lived a long and happy life and her family believe they were fortunate to have such an intelligent, bright, independent and lovely character with them for so many years.

## Home Again

I emigrated in June 1960 and went to Montreal where I was welcomed by distant cousins of my Mother's. Montreal is a fascinating city and is, of course, in the Province of Quebec which has a tremendous French influence. Early in 1961, I had the opportunity of moving to Washington D.C. as my Mother's cousin and her husband were there at the time. I worked first of all for the Australian Services Staff and then transferred to the British Embassy where I worked for the Trade Department and then as P.A. in the Shipping Attache's Office. This latter position was particularly interesting as U.S. maritime policy was not exactly popular with other maritime nations. After a trip home in 1962, I returned to Montreal for a few months before I headed off in early 1963 to New York City and worked for the 'United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations' to give it its full title. This was a fascinating job and I remained there until 1965.

I returned once again to Montreal - again by sea but not realising this trip would turn out to be very important for me in the future. In the meantime, I worked for the company who was the major sub-contractor for the Habitat '67 housing project at Montreal's World Fair 'Expo 67'. Following a further period with that company, I then joined Scotiabank, one of Canada's big 5 chartered banks and in 1973 transferred to the Bank's executive offices in Toronto. I was in Toronto until 1979 working at the Bank and then for a firm of lawyers.

In 1978, the ship's doctor I had met in 1965 returned to Canada, (and with whom I had had no contact in the interim), contacted me and, to cut a long story short, we married in 1979 and were living in Windsor, Ontario, which is on the Canadian border with the state of Michigan. I rejoined Scotiabank and worked for the Bank on a relief basis for 15 years (so that Donald and I could travel which we did extensively) and then permanently until I retired in 2001. Sadly my husband, Donald, died in 2002 at 96 years of age but he, himself, would have said he had a very good innings!

Over the years, I and then we had travelled to the U.K. on a regular basis to visit family. Donald was a Canadian but came to Edinburgh to his FRCS in surgery and remained in Britain for 46 years when he returned to his home town, Windsor. After his death, I continued to come on a regular basis and stayed for longer periods. In 2004 I went through the Panama Canal travelling from Fort Lauderdale, Florida to San Diego and in 2006 went to Antarctica, both of which were fascinating trips for very different reasons. I am very happy to be back in Scotland - and in the U.K. - as all through the years I was away I kept in touch with friends with whom I had grown up, and now it is a pleasure for me to see them on a more regular basis.

Marjorie Young, (*nee MacEwen* - 1945-53)



**Marjorie Young**  
(front row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from the right)

Felicity Cromwell Griffiths (*nee Shanks*), would very much like news of Joy Falconer, her best friend at the Beacon between 1951 and 1953.



**Felicity Cromwell Griffiths**

## NEWS UPDATES

**Lisa Baxter** is now studying Law at Strathclyde University.

**Catriona Bowser** graduated from Glasgow University in 2009 with a B.V.M.S. with commendation.

**Barbara Brown** (nee Lindsay), has just completed her first year teaching at the British International School in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and has loved it. She has a class of hard working P7 pupils and finds the Vietnamese a happy people who are always willing to help out. However, she is looking forward to catching up with friends when she's home in Scotland for the summer.

**Clifford Hughes** (Headmaster 1975 – 1981) was awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists in October 2009.



**Barbara Brown (nee Lindsay)**



**Clifford Hughes**



**Stuart Imrie has now been accepted at Moray House to study for a PGCE**



## Australasia Tour 2010

**Stuart Imrie, a former Beaconsfield pupil who is currently working in the PE department, was selected to represent Scotland at Touch Rugby on a recent tour to Australasia. He has written the following report of his experience.**

*I was lucky enough to be invited to go on the Scottish Touch Rugby tour to Singapore and Australia. The tour consisted of a test match against Singapore, the first test match in history to be played on Singapore soil. From here, we travelled to Sydney where we had been invited to play at the NSW State Cup, the largest and most competitive sporting tournament in the world.*

*Singapore started with a warm up game against the Singapore Barbarians which Scotland won 7-3 after being cut short due to a mid afternoon monsoon! The evening test still took place even after the monsoon earlier in the day, which Scotland won 8-1 against a young Singaporean team who did themselves proud.*

*The New South Wales State Cup has over 3000 competitors taking part in various divisions. The Scotland team was invited to play in the premier division at the Men's Open level. This tournament was nothing like I had ever seen or experienced before, from the speed of play to the crowd support. The magnitude of the game could only be likened to the following football receives in Scotland. Playing in the State Cup was a steep learning curve which has undoubtedly helped us all, especially with the focus now firmly on this summer's World Cup.*

*My personal highlight of the State Cup was playing against, arguably, the best touch player in the world and the best rugby league player in the world. Their two respective teams met in a closely fought final where Hornsby won 4-3 against Western Suburbs.*

### Linsey McGregor

In September 2011, I will be going to Tanzania, Africa where I will be volunteering in a village primary school for 12 weeks. I will be travelling with Personal Overseas Development (PoD), a leading non-profit organisation. Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world and teaching there will be challenging but rewarding. Education is highly valued and really can change the lives of the children and I would love to do my part to make a difference. So I am raising money towards the cost of my placement, 60% of which goes directly to the school project I'll be working on, by selling little 'Sock Monkeys'. Each monkey has been individually and lovingly made by hand, by me transforming a simple pair of (new) socks into a cheeky little monkey! With my family, I am also doing a sponsored walk.



### Ewan Murchison

Ewan received an MBE for his tour of Afghanistan with the Royal Marines. He is pictured here with his wife, mother and brother Rod, who was also at Beaconsfield.

### Emma Shaw

My time in Tanzania so far has been absolutely incredible. I'm teaching English at both the local primary school and secondary school and am loving being a teacher!!! The children are amazing and so enthusiastic. My favourite part of every lesson comes at the end as you're leaving the classroom. They all stand up and wave and chant, "Goodbye teacher and i sank yoo teacher GOODBYE TEECHER!!!" and wave and smile at you. It's such a lovely feeling!

I'm also volunteering at the local orphanage where I love the kids in a different way. As soon as you walk through the door they yell your name and swarm you, so that you have about 3 children hanging off you at once! I've learned so much about looking after babies - in particular putting on non-disposable nappies. Three different layers which all require folding in a different way was extremely challenging at first, but now I'm even prouder that I've got the hang of it!!!

I've had an amazing time here and can't believe i only have a week left - I'm going to miss everything so much although I also can't wait to see everyone at home!

**Kevin MacIsaac** is now living in Sydney with his embryologist wife. He is still acting and is about to embark on a stand up comedy "career". To fill the gaps he has also started his own business delivering corporate training.



Emma Shaw with Andrea at an Orphanage in Arusha, Tanzania.



### Rhona and Malcolm Walker's Golden Wedding (17/09/10)

Rhona and Malcolm Walker celebrated their Golden Wedding Day at The Blythswood Square Hotel in Glasgow on September 18<sup>th</sup> 2010, with a lunch for lots of relatives who were at the wedding. She was Rhona McArthur and at the Beacon from about 1946 – 1952 and Malcolm was at Hurst Grange from 1941 – 1948

Rhona lived at Fernfield in Bridge of Allan and Malcolm lived at Netherby in Stirling. They were married in St Saviour's Church, Bridge of Allan and had four children. There are now eleven grandchildren spread across the globe from the UK to Ohio and Melbourne.

### Rhona and Malcolm Walker

The picture opposite shows L-R Colin McArthur (Hurst Grange), Christine McArthur (Beacon), Malcolm Walker (Hurst Grange), Rhona Walker (Malcolm's wife from Beacon) and her two sisters, Gail McArthur (now Mrs Alex Campbell) and her twin Deirdre aka Dede McArthur (now Mrs Gavin Morton), who were also pupils at The Beacon. Additional guests included Margie Barber Fleming and Patrick Walker who attended the Beacon and Hurst Grange respectively.



**Ben Taylor** has set up his own company Bikki Marketing. He still does most of his own work for UKTI on an annual rolling contract but also has other clients in the UK and abroad.

**Nikki MacLeod Taylor** has just opened her own boutique in Bridge of Allan and would be delighted to see any of you there.

**Heather Tweedie** (nee Smith) married Stuart at the Atholl Palace Hotel in Pitlochry in December. They are living in Falkirk with their daughter Skye-Rose who will be five in July.

### Emma Struthers

Emma returned to the school in the autumn, with a group of children in her capacity as a volunteer with Children of Chernobyl Life Line. This organisation brings children from the areas of Belarus and Ukraine still affected by high levels of radioactivity to this country for four weeks' respite. Even this short break can add two years onto a young person's life expectancy and give them a good time.



Children of Chernobyl

**Jade Williams** has been given a place to study for a PGCE in Business Studies at Manchester University when she completes her degree this summer.

In memory of a friend who died last year of cancer, Jade is taking part in the Great North Run (a half marathon) in September to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support. If you would like to make a donation, you can do so at:

[www.justgiving.com/jadegreatnorth](http://www.justgiving.com/jadegreatnorth)