

# WOLDINGHAM SACRED HEART ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Woldingham Sacred Heart Association held on Old  
Girls' Day 09 May 2010

Present: Susan Adams-Cairns, Alison Aiken, Sr Christine Austin, Amanda Baer, Anne Bailey, Victoria, Bekker, Sr Dorothy Bell, Pippa (Agnes) Bellasis, Ann Birrell, Charlotte Boyd, Sarah Brett, Anna Burrage, Patsy Cave, Rosemary Chambers, Gillie Collyer, Jeanette Constable Maxwell, Sr Kathleen Cox, Carolyn Field, Laura Forbes-Coy, Trish Frisby, Elizabeth Gillespie, Sr Mimi Goddard, Elizabeth Gross, Lisa Halabi, Jacky Hall, Nicola Harris, Dominie Herman, Sr Mary Hinde, Abi Hoyle, Lady Rosemary Johnson-Ferguson, Rosemary Keith, Sophie Keith, Sarah Keith, Miranda Kelly, Sr Kay Killoran, Sarah Kopferschmitt, Nadine Kynoch, Sr Nora Lester, Frances Lynch, Anne-Marie Masraf, Sr Monica McGreal, Judy Mella, Jacqueline Motion, Sr April O'Leary, Jane O'Riordan, Loretta Pang, Fran Potter, Meriel Rowson, Linette Sanne, Sue Sayers, Elsie Sebastian, Jacquie Shanahan, Teresa Simpson, Sr Elizabeth Smith, Jane Stewart-Lockhart, Zoe Stoker, Sr Mary Totton, Sally Traverse-Healy, Jayne Triffitt, Mona Vandame, Sr Meg Walshe, Fiona Walter, Lady Patricia Watson, Sr Margaret Wilson, Sr Ruth Woakes, Rosie Wookey, Fiona Wright, Nicky Bell, Norma Campbell.

Apologies: Margaret Agnew, Elizabeth Alizadeh, Charlotte Ambrose, Charlotte Asplin, Serena Baer, Sr Mary Barrow, Vicky Beale, Samantha Blazquez-Vilarrubias, Katherine Bond, Margaret Botwright, Georgie Cave, Rebecca Clarke, Virginia Constable Maxwell, Davina Crole, Maysel Dawson, Miranda de Normann, Sophie de Potesta, Louise Douty, Winifred Everitt, Georgina Field, Lavinia Fleming, Charlotte Fleming, Miranda Fountain, Paula Franklin, Caroline Gibbs, Lily Gilderdale, Valentine Goblet d'Alviella, Olivia Goldman, Fiona Goodhart, Sarah Green, Ros Gregg, Mrs J M Gunn, Tanya Hamilton, Fenella Heard, Bridget Hoadley, Jamileh Holt, Sara Hommel, Lucille Howe, Gillian Hunt, Petronella Kasolo, Joanna Keane, Ursula Keeling, Georgina Keen, Margaret Kelly, Rebecca Kerr, Linda Klomp, Julia Lam, Sandra Leche, Henty Leggett, Ellen Leslie, Kelster Liu, Diana Llewelyn, Winnie Lo, Jane Lothian, Jane Macfarlane, Margaret Magrath, Marion Magrath, Rachel Maguire, Carola Manchester, Fleur Martin du Pan, Lizzy Massey, Amanda Mather, Bridget May, Gwen McCammon, Consuelo Moorsom, Judith Mossman, Lady Mary Mumford, Sr Mary Lucy OCDM (Lilah) Newdigate, Sarah Over, Catriona Pakenham-Walsh, Yvonne Pardo, Alison Petrie, Liza Petrie-Angelov, Maria Pisani, Annabel Portsmouth, Octavia Pusey, Charlotte Redshaw, Nicole Rimmer, Sophie Roche, Andrea Ryde, Gigi Saadani, Isabel Saavedra, Maria Lina Santos Velayo, Mother Shanley, Alison Shannon, Alice Shields, Morag, Lady Stafford, Amy Stark, Kay Swift, Mary Thomas MBE, Susan Thompson, Margaret Thunder, Pat Tomkins, Judith Tully, Candide Turner-Bridger, Darina Vogel, Caroline Walker, Sarah Walsh-Billon, Truda Weiler, Elizabeth West, Olivia Wilcocks, Samantha Williams, Louise Wright, Priscilla Wyeth.

1. Sr Mimi Goddard opened the meeting with a prayer

2. Apologies were given as above

### 3. Approval of the AGM 2009 Minutes

The minutes of the AGM 2009 were read and approved, proposed by Miranda Kelly and seconded by Amanda Baer.

### 4. Chairman's Report

JOR reported that it had been a busy year. In January she gave a talk to the current 6<sup>th</sup> form, explaining the benefits and roles of WSHA membership, drawing comparison to the representation of the five core Sacred Heart goals in the chapel windows. The WSHA scholarship interviews will take place over the next week and awards will be presented at Prize Day. She thanked Abi Hoyle for all her help with this and mentioned the availability of the RSCJ charity bursary for any member. JOR reiterated the importance of the WOLDWIDEWEB for communicating and appealed to members to provide email addresses. There are many exciting changes which have taken and will continue to take place, including the Facebook link to attract younger members. In the words of Madeleine Sophie we must be ever ready to adapt, change and modify our methods.

JOR and her team are working on recruiting the younger year reps and contacting the established reps to help with ideas. Social gatherings have been suggested to get this going.

John Triffitt has been working on archive material and has, with his Year 9 group, scanned items which are on display at Old Girls' Day.

Charities supported this year have been St Catherine's Hospice and AMASC. A total of £323.65 was sent to each charity.

A sub-committee has been formed, with Amanda Baer, Miranda Kelly and Kelly Jane Noades to plan the bi-annual WSHA/School carol concert, to take place this year on Tuesday 7 December at the Holy Trinity Church, Prince Consort Road, London SW7, at 7pm with a 5pm rehearsal.

JOR reminded members that travel expenses can be claimed for WSHA committee work, though these need to be approved in advance of the business meeting by the Chairman and Bursar. She ended her report thanking Jacky Hall and Chantal Keast for their contribution to WSHA's work.

Richard Stone's speech on behalf of the Governors at today's Mass is reported below. JOR suggested it be posted on the WSHA website with a note to advise how to obtain a hard copy if required.

### Richard Stone's speech

On behalf of the governors, I would like to add my welcome to that of the headmistress. It is fantastic not only to see so many former pupils here today but also so many of those who taught them in the past; a special welcome to you all. I hope you will take the opportunity to stroll around the school and see some of the changes that have taken place over the last twenty five years inspired and supported in many cases by the nuns who served as governors over that time.

About four years ago, when I was appointed Chairman of Governors, I was approached by Sr Meg Walshe and Sr Bernie Porter who explained to me that, with the growing age profile of the Society, the nuns had decided that they would like to step back from the day to day affairs of the school and the increasing legal responsibilities associated with being governors. At the same time, they asked that we create a corporate structure that would enable the society to transfer to the school, at no cost, the land upon which the buildings

currently stand; an incredibly generous gesture for which we thank them. Hence, we started the long process of incorporating the school as a charitable company. You have no idea how much red tape we had to overcome. However, incorporation was achieved last year after a lot of hard work from the Provincial Treasurer and our own Bursar, Gerry Hunt. It was at this time we were advised that, at the Society's behest, Sr April O'Leary and Sr Mimi Goddard would be moving to a new home this year. This was, of course, a very momentous decision as it represented the ending of an era and the end of the Society's physical connections to the school. Nevertheless, we wish them both every blessing in their new abode.

As the headmistress has said, the school has no intention of losing its links with the society. The vision, the ethos and the values so diligently developed and followed over the last hundred years or more, remain at the heart of the school's teaching and day to day activities. Furthermore, the Society, through the Provincial and the Provincial Treasurer, will continue to retain two shares in the charitable company which now owns Woldingham School so they will no doubt keep us on our toes, assuming the Vatican will release Sr Bernie Porter from time to time.

In my time on the board, I have always been struck by the nuns' open mindedness; their willingness to embrace change and their dedication to education - the move from Roehampton; the switch to lay management; the appointment of an Anglican headmistress, Jayne's predecessor, and the famous occasion some years ago when they vetoed the then headmistress's plan to build a new chapel for the school on the grounds that the money would better directed toward improving the educational needs of the children.

Sisters, we are eternally grateful to you for what you have brought to us; what you have given us and the inspiration you leave with us. May God bless you all.

#### 5. Honorary President's Report

The academic year 2009/2010 has been very successful so far. We welcomed our new Deputy Head, Nick Waite, in January. He was previously a Housemaster at Tonbridge School. The Head of Marden, Helen Rowe, has settled in well and this has proved a very successful appointment. We will be saying goodbye to three long-serving members of staff this summer, Mrs Julie Hadley, who is enjoying her farewell celebrations with many staff and old girls today, Mrs Carole Evans and Miss Beverley Fookes.

Numbers have remained steady in the last two years, with numbers looking good for September. We refurbished the first floor of Main House during the summer for the Year 9 accommodation and this has proved worthwhile. We are expecting 96 girls in Year 9 next September. Visitors are always delighted by the warm and friendly atmosphere, the beautiful surroundings, the outstanding pastoral care and the excellent academic standards. So the things that really matter do not change!

The examination results last summer were brilliant. At A level, 88% of the grades were at A and B, 4% up on last year and at GCSE, the A\* and A grades were up by 4%. We were in the top 1% of independent schools for value added results at both GCSE and A level. We were thrilled with this because it means we are improving the academic standards of the girls from when they arrive right across the ability range.

The Governors are introducing a renewal plan for the next five years which will include:

- Renovating Berwick House

- Improving the sports facilities to include better floodlighting for the all weather pitches: building a tennis pavilion; replacing the tennis bubble and upgrading the swimming pool complex.
- Developing the Marden Undercroft to provide a school hall
- Completing the upgrade of year 10 boarding accommodation
- Refurbishing classrooms not upgraded over the last 3 years
- Improving the Library facilities
- Enhancing the IT infrastructure
- Upgrading the Health and safety aspects of the school to meet new legislative requirements
- Resurfacing the roads throughout the site.
- Updating dining facilities

In recognition of the change of balance with boarders and day girls, the pastoral structure from Years 7 – 11 will be changing to a three tier system of a Head of Year, Housemistress and Assistant Housemistress. This is already working very well in Years 7, 8 and 10.

We enjoyed a very lively production of 'Sleeping Beauty' last weekend with girls from Years 7, 8 and 9. Earlier in the academic year, the Sixth Form starred in 'Oh What a Lovely War'. There were some outstanding individual performances. Sport and Music continue to thrive. Each week sees hundreds of girls opting to take part in extra curricular sport, never more than in the Summer Term. Just this week, our choir Amaris sang Evensong at Jesus College, Oxford and were welcomed by Philippa Winstanley, an old girl who is an Organ Scholar there.

The girls are fortunate to be given the opportunity to go on a trip to China this summer and a trip to Japan next year. In addition, a group of girls are undertaking a special camp in Borneo.

I visited Paris with the Heads of Sacred Heart Schools from Europe back in October and we went to the birthplace of Madeleine Sophie Barat at Joigny.

In June I will be joining with other English Heads of Sacred Heart Schools in Newcastle.

We have been fortunate this year to have the services of Fr Sunny Paul while he has been on Sabbatical. Next year, we will be joined by Mgr Tony Rogers, Vicar General of the East Anglian diocese who will be spending his Sabbatical year with us.

We are sad to be saying goodbye to Sr April and Sr Mimi. We hope they will settle into Duchesne House well and come back and visit us. We look forward to creating the Sacred Heart garden in front of Marden which seems particularly appropriate given Sr Mimi's important role in Marden.

The girls, management and the staff are very anxious to maintain Woldingham School as a Sacred Heart School. We are very proud of our traditions, history and ethos and we will make sure that future generations understand the legacy of the work of the nuns in this place and the example and vocation of Madeleine Sophie Barat.

We are grateful to Trish Frisby who has agreed to be the staff member of the WHSA Committee, taking over from Julie Hadley. Trish worked here as a Maths teacher from 1977 until 1982 and was educated at the Sacred Heart School in Hammersmith.

I would like to pay tribute to the work of Jacky Hall and Chantal Keast who work in the Marketing and Development Department here at Woldingham School. They organise all the WHSA events and keep in touch with the Old Girls. They are also responsible for the production of the magazine 'Woldingham Life' which has been particularly well received this year.

We are very grateful to all of the WHSA Committee for their support of the school and especially to Jane O'Riordan for the commitment and dedication she has shown this year as your Chairman. It has been good for me to understand the very strong affection that the old girls and nuns have for this school.

## 6. Head of Sixth Form Report

The Sixth Form continues to grow in size and success.

Our A Level examination results for 2009 were again excellent and the U6 worked extremely hard, with expert guidance from their subject teachers, to achieve these outstanding results. 88% of all A Level grades achieved were A or B and 60% were A grades.

I will mention just a few subjects where students particularly excelled. In Art, 13 of the 16 candidates achieved an A grade, and in Geography 15 students achieved A out of a total 19 entered. In one of our most demanding A Level subjects, Mathematics, 18 out of 21 achieved an A grade and in Further Mathematics 6 out of 9 achieved the highest possible grade.

Sixth Form students are continuing to gain independence through a more flexible and personal approach to their time management.

The L6, new in September, found it particularly difficult this year to adjust to the demands and expectations of advanced level study. We therefore spent a lot of time gathering staff and students views and then supporting the students with clear guidance and advice on how to get the best out of their A Level studies.

All girls are supported by a team of 16 coaches or tutors who meet with their tutees individually to discuss their weekly programmes and personal targets. We are currently reviewing this system to ensure the girls are gaining maximum benefit from the role of the tutors.

The team of tutors, led by the Careers Department, guide the students, from the Spring Term of the L6, through the university application process. The 2009 cohort all gained places at a range of excellent British universities. Some of the most popular institutions for the class of 2009 included Imperial College, LSE, Nottingham, UCL, Newcastle, Warwick and Leeds. In terms of course choice, students applied to a broad range of courses including Veterinary Medicine, Nursing, Architecture, Biochemical Engineering, Accounting & Finance, through to Primary School Teaching, History of Art, Anthropology and Law.

We have consolidated other forms of academic enrichment to support students' learning skills in their A Levels and to help prepare them for the challenges of higher education. We continue to offer AS Critical Thinking to some of our able L6 students. This year we are also reviewing the academic enrichment programme for both the L6 and U6 to ensure we can offer them the widest and most beneficial choice of options beyond their A Level subjects.

The IDEAS programme (Independently Designed Ethical and Academic Sessions) continues to flourish and allows groups of U6 students to prepare a presentation and debate on a topic directly relevant to their higher education ambitions. The topic must stretch beyond their school syllabus, but be accessible and informative for the rest of the year group in the audience.

From September the U6 will also follow the refined weekly General Programme which develops their skills in a range of practical areas such as Personal Finance, Cookery, Citizenship and Personal Presentation Skills.

Over the last two years we have developed a very wide range of academic societies and extra-curricular committees – these are made up of Sixth Formers who want to be involved with leading the School's academic enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities. Societies include the Geography Society, and the Greenwell Society (Economics, Business Studies and Politics). There are also Sixth Form Committees to help run Drama, Art, Music and Sport in the school.

There are also many opportunities to take on other responsibilities within the school. These encourage students to develop confidence, leadership, teamwork skills and other personal skills invaluable to life beyond Woldingham. Such responsibilities include the 18-strong team of Ribbons, a team of Senior Guides, weekday and weekend Receptionists, and also the school magazine editorial team. Business-minded Sixth Formers also join the Young Enterprise Scheme and many girls continue to work towards their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The list of Sixth Form visits, trips, expeditions, talks, presentations, projects and dinners is long and varied! A few highlights from this last year include a presentation by Philippa Vernon-Powell who gave a moving and inspiring talk based on her charity New Life Mexico. The Greenwell Society Presentation by Nigel Farage MP was well-attended with enthusiastic participation from our A Level Politics students!

Overseas trips for Sixth Formers this year have included the L6 Art History visit to Venice and Florence, the U6 trip to New York and two sixth formers took part in an investigation and visit to Auschwitz. They were involved in several study days and presented on their moving experiences to the school.

The School is keen to support WSHA and to engage the sixth form before they leave and promote the benefits of WSHA membership. We were delighted this year that the U6 could be properly introduced to the role of WSHA and the value and application of the Sacred Heart Values. They were also introduced to the WSHA Scholarship, for post A Level plans.

We were very pleased to witness the awarding of the WSHA Scholarships to twelve of our 2009 Leavers on Prize Day. The generosity of the WSHA Committee has been very much appreciated, and particularly the hard work of Nadine, Anne and Dominie, with the assistance of Chantal here in school. 11 students have applied for the Scholarship this year and they are being interviewed by the Committee on Thursday next week.

Thank you to the WSHA Committee for your continued hard work and support.

## 7. RSCJ Report

Sr April O'Leary's report from the RSCJ has been published in this year's issue of Woldingham Life

## 8. AMASC Report

Gillie Collyer reported that she had attended the AGM in March and the Society had enjoyed their annual outing to Clarence House as well as lunches at the Hurlingham club. £1,000 has been raised towards the micro industry projects; candle making, mushroom cultivation and sewing in Uganda – all three are up and running and making income.

In April she attended the World Congress in Malta with Sr Mary Totton, Anne Bailey and Hilary Thompson. It started with Mass at the Cathedral with every national flag represented processing in at the start. During the Congress talks centred on poverty, immigration and disabilities. Sr

Hilda of Uganda gave a Powerpoint presentation on the micro industries, various events and the spirit of sharing the same heritage, working towards a common goal.

#### 9. Accounts for year ended 31 July 2009

The accounts were presented, proposed by Miranda Kelly and seconded by Sr Dorothy Bell, signed by JOR.

#### 10. Election of New Members to the Committee and of the Chairman

The following members were elected to the committee:

Jane Pendered: nominated by Miranda Kelly, seconded by Jane O’Riordan

Emma Merrifield: nominated by Amanda Baer, seconded by Miranda Kelly

Philippa Windridge: nominated by Zoe Stoker, seconded by Miranda Kelly

Trish Frisby was co-opted onto the committee as the current staff member: proposed by Jane O’Riordan and seconded by Amanda Baer.

#### 11. AOB

Several members made comments and asked questions as follows:

1. A request was made to list the School Governors on the WOLDWIDWEB – how many of them are Catholics?
2. A question was asked of JT – what proportion of pupils in the School is Catholic, to which she replied about 35%. She was further questioned as to why the Priest invites non-Catholics to come for a blessing at Communion, as it suggests there are many non-Catholics. JT replied that there is a contingency of non-Catholic Christians and that it is our normal practice to invite non-Catholics for a blessing. She is keen to increase participation by all the girls.
3. Question: is there guidance by the Vatican on inter-communion? JT replied that we do not have inter-communion as the Anglican priest provides communion reserved by the Anglican sacrament
4. Question: Is Sr Goddard leaving the School due to the potential blocking of faith schools by the Government? JT replied that there is no influence by the Government on independent schools and that there should be no cause for worry about Woldingham remaining independent.
5. Mrs Stewart praised WSHA for Woldingham Life, which she said was wonderful. She asked if deaths could be posted up on the website rather than being given as very late news in the magazine, in case people wanted to attend the funeral, citing Miss Hockley’s death as an example. JOR said this was possible, as long as the information is provided either to the School or the Committee in good time. She asked if there was anyone who did not have e-mail, which amounted to only two or three people in the room.
6. Rose Bagley (past staff member) praised the magazine but found the article by Louise Bagshawe tasteless and harmful and misrepresented the true facts. As a former member of staff she advised that the issue had not been dealt with in the manner Louise Bagshawe had reported and that members did not want to read about such negative issues. JH defended the decision to print it, having sought advice from JOR and JT and citing that the same situation may have been dealt with in school differently in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. NK suggested that RB could perhaps respond to the article in print in the next issue of the magazine, which Rose Bagley declined, thanking NK for the opportunity .

7. Rosemary Keith suggested it would be useful to have a microphone for questions at the next AGM.
8. JOR thanked the Committee for their hard work and advised that there would be a presentation, following this AGM, in the Wilson Room to Sisters Mimi and April. She further thanked Nadine Kynoch for all her work on the bursary and scholarship sub-committee, as well as those committee members standing down this year, who are: Annabel Portsmouth, Sue Adams-Cairns, Meriel Rowson and Julie Hadley.

She announced that she was also standing down as Chairman and as a Committee member due to many pressures with her new business and that she hoped to return to the Committee when things were less hectic.

**Date of next AGM: To Be Confirmed**

**Date of next Committee Meeting: Tuesday 21 September 2010 at 6pm for 6.30pm, Farm Street, Mayfair (details to be provided)**