

# RAVEN'S CROFT NEWSLETTER

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**Our website address: [www.tbds.org.uk/ravencroft/](http://www.tbds.org.uk/ravencroft/)**

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Jo and Sue wish all the Ravens a very Happy New Year

Here is our last Newsletter, which we hope you enjoy reading! Whilst we have found the newsletters a pleasure to write, we have also struggled with news from you.

Also, I have not been in the best of health during the year, and with less Old Girls, as we are all getting older, I think it is time to call it a day. We have thoroughly enjoyed hearing from you throughout the years and putting you back in touch with friends. I made my decision before Friends Reunited decided to close and everyone now uses Social Media. When I mentioned this to Sue, she told her friend Julia Cooke, so Julia writes to me.

**Julia says:** I hear from Sue that you are not going to do any more newsletters. I totally agree. We are all getting older, the history and anecdotes of Ravens Croft have all been told. Put the "News" to bed.

You have pulled together pupils from way back to school closure and joined together those who had lost contact with their friends. Historically, the life of the school is documented, thanks to you and Sue.

The two "Grand Gatherings" stirred up memories – you have the School Website – job done.

To you and Sue, many, many thanks. Julia *Ed: Thank you Julia for those very kind words*

Our School Website was started by Edwina Morris and Coralie Clement (nee Wigg) for **FREE** since our first reunion in 2002. During 2015, this found Elizabeth Adams, who found us through Google, so **many, many thanks** to Edwina and Coralie. I think/hope they will keep the Ravens Croft webpage on the internet for a few years, so any queries can still be answered. The website address is **[www.tbds.org.uk/ravencroft/](http://www.tbds.org.uk/ravencroft/)**

As some of you will know, when I organised the two Reunions at Eastbourne, back in 2002 and 2005, I opened a Ravens Croft Reunion Account for these events. I always said at the Reunions, that any money I had left over in the account, would go to a charity of our choice. To begin with, I used surplus money for printing and postage each year, but then moved to sending the newsletters via email, which cut out most of the printing and postage. I have now closed the Account, and Sue told me to send a cheque to Diabetes, as she had friends with that problem, and as you may know, I am diabetic.

## **The letter I received from Diabetes UK**

*We just wanted to say a huge thank you and tell you how amazing we think you are for kindly donating leftover cash from your Ravens Croft Reunion account. It was lovely to read that you have kept in contact with the girls with a yearly newsletter and managed to arrange a couple of reunions since the schools closure.*

*Please accept this letter as the official receipt of your donation*

*We hope you'll pass on our thanks to the girls for agreeing the money could be donated to charity and thank you for choosing Diabetes UK, as without these donations, none of our works would be possible.*

We have also sent a donation to Coralie and Edwina, who have been running the website for the school since 2002. Thank you both very much indeed. Much appreciated by us all.

*We have also received a letter from Coralie and Edwina, thanking us for the donation. The website will stay as long as possible. Coralie also says, that she is diabetic as well, so good choice!!*

***I was at a Book Fair in Tunbridge Wells, and came across a small booklet called 'Ravencroft', Warlingham, Surrey. In April 1904, RC moved to a more 'countrified' house at Warlingham, Surrey.***

The booklet says the premises include large Dining Hall, Gymnasium, good Classrooms, all bright and airy. The Bedrooms are divided by curtains, so that each girl has her separate cubicle.

The regular course of subjects include:  
Religious Knowledge, English Language and Literature, History, Geography, Elementary



Science, Elementary Elocution, Mathematics, German, French, Elementary Drawing, Class Singing, Drilling and Plain Needlework. Games played are Hockey, Netball, Tennis and Cricket for Juniors.

Fees: Pupils under 12 years old – 80 guineas per annum. Pupils over 12 years old - 90 guineas per annum  
Mrs Rheam and Miss Benington receive a limited number of pupils to whom they offer the best modern advantages combined with pleasant home surroundings.

I heard from the following during the year

**Elizabeth Adams (1950)** now Kirkman writes. She found us on Google by putting in 'Ravenscroft' and got a surprise! Elizabeth has a feeling that she was expelled!! The names she can remember are Sybil Flint, Rosemary Edgar, Felicity Maclauren, and Jane Earp.

She remembers being in a play in which she played the Duchess of Marlborough and she had her leg in plaster, which didn't matter, as they were flouncing about in long Dresses. After her education, she went to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. She understudied for Mary Ure in 'Look back in Anger' at the Royal Court, then she was in the 'Country wife' with Laurence Harvey. Womans Hour etc.

Elizabeth married an Army Officer and went to Hong Kong where she worked for Radio Hong Kong and did Forces favourites, read the news etc. She did a course in Caligraphy, ran her own gardening business and worked for Arabella Lennox Boyd. She has 2 sons, one runs London TV and the other one works for MI5 and GCHQ. She lives in Lymington, Hants, and has opened her garden for NGS for the last 15 years.



**Elizabeth has sent a photo of Sports Day 1950-51. Can anyone name the runners? Do let me know**

**Rosemary Blascheck writes (1962):** Murray and I abandoned the family for Christmas in 2014, and for the first time in over 40 years, went to Norfolk Island, an old penal colony off the coast of NSW and we had a fabulous time. No family stress, just the two of us being catered for! No cooking, no cleaning etc. Otherwise, I am often in Sydney doing a stint of 'grandson' sitting.

**Sarah Booth (1965)** now Lauxmann writes: I remember hiding in a cupboard with a few others and listening to the radio (Radio Caroline) and its music and where my father used to advertise his business!! Also having picnics in there etc.

I loved all the sport I played at Ravens Croft and the away matches of any team I was in, was great fun and I still enjoy sport to this day, although I don't participate any more, except for the occasional cycling.

Also our yearly outings for Bobby's Birthday and the beautiful scenery with the river at the bottom.

At the moment we have 3 French backpackers staying with us (one is a chef!!) in Queensland and today and all this week, we will be outside in the garden cleaning/repairing damage from Cyclone Marcia who passed through last week. One bridge has gone that weighed over 200kgs! – that went onto our small island. A retaining wall went as well as the dam being partially blocked. (Ed: Sarah wrote this in March 2015)

**Rosanna Calver writes (1953):** In Australia, I enjoy watching the 'Antiques Roadshow', as they do many re-runs here in Oz. I have never seen anyone I know on the screen, but I wonder if any 'Old Ravens' have been spotted? (Ed: Anyone been to Antiques Roadshow? We know one of the antiques expert often on the show. At school she was Carolyn Hoare (1962), but on screen is known as Bunny Campione. She was always known as 'Bunny' at school and is very interested in Teddy Bears and toys.

**Alison Field (196?)** writes from Georgia, USA: When back in Eastbourne in the summer, have seen Philippa Perrins cycling around Eastbourne. Her father was a Housemaster at Blackwater House, Eastbourne College. Philippa married and had a son (James Kirtley) who played cricket for England. I also see her at the Ladies tennis event at Eastbourne, as she works as a sports physio at this event.

*The next letter I come across is from*

**Philippa Perrins (1964)** she writes: I meet Alison Field at Devonshire Park, Eastbourne annually at the Ladies International Tennis event, where I have worked as a physio for over 35 years and she has been a steward or driver for probably as many years

My most vivid memories are of the staff, some of whom I held in great affection – the matron Mrs Allen and Miss Morrison in particular. Otherwise I can only admit with a degree of shame at successfully glueing Miss Angier to her chair in the 3<sup>rd</sup> form (aided and abetted by others who I cannot remember!), and being made to pay 2s 6d along with others for the dry cleaning of Miss Angier's skirt!

One last memory is of Miss Roberts's report on me one year when she wrote "her manner tends to be aggressive"! As I had no idea what the word meant, I wasn't able to change my ways but the words obviously stung if I can remember them 56 years later!

**Christine Howes (1964)** writes: I have moved house – again. I believe some of us who boarded for their entire childhood can never really settle down. I have had a wonderful life with two marriages and a wonderful daughter who was married in August 2015. I have followed my dream and went to Whitehorse in the Yukon to follow the Gold Rush routes which was absolutely fascinating. I signed up to be a helper in the Yukon Quest sled race last February (temperatures of minus 50) visiting Frank Turner for a day, who has run that race for 15 years. I helped with some of his 150 sled dogs.

I am still working as a remedial aromatherapist but doing less now and concentrating on enjoying my cogs and continuing good health. I was great friends with Carina Nordlander and would love to get in touch with her.

*(Ed: Christine/Carina I have the addresses if you want to get back in touch )*

## ANECDOTES

**HETHERINGTON** Tessa (1951) Tessa thinks that Sybil Flint and Deirdre Fuller would remember her, also many of the other Leavers of that year 1951. Tessa says that Sybil and I both had piano lessons with Norah Newby, who was quite a character and the source of much jollity. (Ours, anyway) Perhaps Sybil can remember playing a Poulenc Piano Duet, although I can't imagine what the reason for it was.

Tessa now lives in Birmingham and can spend more time with 2 small grandsons than playing the piano, which is quite a change!

## NEWSPOINT

**DE BARNHOLT** Diana (1964) Diana has now retired from working at the King Edward VII Hospital in London. She enjoys her senior years and it gives her more time for gardening.

Her son Maxim is living in Herstmonceux, Sussex and has 3 children aged 18, 16 and 14.

**DU PONT** Sarah (1959) Sarah remarried on 25 October 2014 – a very small ceremony in Chichester.

**EGGLETON** Jill (1955) Jill's sister, Judy, writes that Jill is still in the same nursing home in Seattle suffering from Alzheimer's Disease (she's suffered from it for several years now). She is very well looked after, but her daughter, Annie, visited her in October and noticed gradual changes happening. Annie now lives in France with her husband John.

**FULLER** Deirdre (1951) Ian and Deirdre celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 10<sup>th</sup> September with all their family and no doubt a card from the Queen! Ian had a small stroke in April but has recovered well

**HOWARD.** Gillian (1957) Gillian who lives in Los Angeles keeps in close touch with Helen Berger, who is also in LA. Gillian wonders whether there are any other Old Ravens in and around LA

**KELMAN** Daphne (1952) Heard from Daphne during the year, who enjoys hearing news of old Ravens. Daphne celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday sometime in Feb/March last year.

**LIDDELL** Sue (1962) Sue sent me a note about the school entering a golf tournament. However, I think that a school that closed over 50 years ago, they would not want us or allow us to enter.

You can see the website at <http://www.thetassiefoursomes.co.uk/>

**TABOR** Nicola (1965) Nikki has been in the Spire Hospital, Southampton having had major open heart surgery. Last year while being treated for a back injury, her Doctor discovered a very loud heart murmur and following tests she was diagnosed with a severely stiffened aortic heart valve. Consultants at Chichester decided to monitor it six monthly but in August a second echocardiogram showed a sharp deterioration, hence the valve replacement operation, which showed there to be a congenital defect which was the cause of the stiffening.

Nikki is now home and spent 2 weeks recuperation with her twin sister Tessa and partner.

**TILLETT** Diana (1956) As some of you will know, Diana's son, Jeremy Vine took part in 'Strictly Come Dancing' on BBC1 in the Autumn. Jeremy did very well and was saved for a few weeks. until the competition really did hot up!

**TOWNSEND.** Vivian (1965) Vivian had her first new knee in July and is waiting to have the other one done. It has revolutionised her life and its great to be 50% free from pain.

**VOKES** Sue (1955) Sue writes that 2015 was a bad year for her – she was diagnosed in May with colon cancer. Fortunately the cancer has not spread to any other organs. After surgery she had twelve fortnightly sessions of preventive chemotherapy. Sue unfortunately had a fall in mid November and completely shattered her right elbow. She had a fake elbow put in and was home with her arm in a soft cast and a sling. We all wish you well Sue.



VAL WILDING, VERITY SCHANCKE DEIRDRE POWE SYBIL  
(PARSONS) (EVAN-SMITH) (FULLER) (FLINT)

### MINI REUNIONS

**1951 Leavers.** Sue Denyer, was over from Canada in October so 8 Old Ravens from that year met up at Harriet Woolfitt's house in Putney, where she had prepared a delicious lunch for us all.

Also present were Sybil Flint, Eve Jackson, Val Parsons, Verity Euan-Smith, Patricia Long-Brown and Deirdre Fuller. They had all reached the magic '80' so sang 'Happy Birthday to Us'!

**1958 Leavers.** Rosemary Redfern met up last year with Rosemary Sims and Gale Caswell, who drops in from South Africa each year

**1959 Leavers.** Sue Aldridge, Carolyn Pertwee and Sarah Du Pont met up for lunch in Richmond in May and afterwards went back to Sue's cottage.

**1965 Leavers** Terry Carraher laid on a lunch for us one very hot day in the summer out in her garden. Also present were Tessa Tabor, Nicola Tabor and Jo Watson and husbands!

**THE RAVEN** – I am still requiring copies of 'The Raven' which you may no longer require. I have stocked up East Sussex Record Office. The British Library has 17 different years, the Society of Genealogists have a few. If you decide you no longer need your copies, please forward them to me, and they can be saved in an Archive.

### OLD RAVENS FOUND

**ADAMS** Elizabeth (1950) Elizabeth found us on Google!! Now Mrs. Kirkman, The Garden House, Grosvenor Gardens, Lymington, Hants SO41 9NS

### DEATHS:

**FRANCOMBE** Penelope (1957) Penny died peacefully at home on 19 September 2015, aged 74. Cherished wife of Hamish, beloved mother of Fiona, Diana and Jennie and adored grandmother.

**FREER-SMITH** May (1944) May died on 20 January 2016. The mother of 4 children, 7 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren, she had taught speech and drama for many years at Sherborne House School in Chandler's Ford, Hampshire. She had successfully bred Dalmatians and was a keen gardener.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

**HOWES** Christine (1964) Mrs. C. Granville, Reverie, 5 Howard Road, Sompting, Sussex BN15 0LP

**TABOR.** Nicola (1965) Mrs. N. Chan, 6 St. Mary's Close, Billingshurst, W. Sussex RH14 9UA

We hope you have enjoyed reading our 14<sup>th</sup> and last newsletter – We have enjoyed keeping you up to date with news of other school friends. You can still keep in contact with me, or if you want to know where old school friends might be, am only too willing to help.

With all good wishes to ALL fellow Ravens

*Jo and Sue*