

FSSW 1966-1973

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FSSW 1966-1973 MEMORES FROM THOSE WHO ATTENDED FRIENDS' SCHOOL, SAFFRON WALDEN

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Introduction
Written by Angus on 27 April 2002



Prompted by Jo Jones (Akins) in June 2002 I started to collect messages from school friends before the reunion in September. How better to include those more distant, or otherwise engaged, and unable to attend a reunion at FSSW? I suggested some themes, such as music and sport, as a way of dredging up those memories. It was meant as a bit of fun!

Some of us did catch up with each other at the FSSW reunion and tercentenary on 28 and 29 September 2002. We had so much fun we did it again in 2005 to celebrate our 50th birthdays.

Angus Willson



Brighton Beach 2002

What do you remember?
Let me know by email: angus.willson@btinternet.com replying [at] with @ Please keep your contact details up-to-date, sending changes to Jo Jones (Akins) at joj@btinternet.com

For information about the school now, see www.friends.org.uk
For information about other year groups and events, see www.oldscholars.com. This includes class lists, a message board and 'panone' photographs.



Christine Brown, Christian Gayfer, Helen Philip (Duddy) 1971

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Christine Brown, Christian Gayfer, Helen Philip [Duddy] 1971

See contributors for links to additions *Nick Hunt, Adrienne Ryder-Cook and Gael Whittle*

Sadly, in March 2007 we heard that *Helen Burgess* had died. School friends attended the memorial service.

Did we really have summers with [blue skies](#)?

New content about Iceland trip 1972 (February 2012) on [Learning 1](#) >

See this different [photo-gallery of the images on this site](#) >

It's not too soon to plan for the 2015 reunion which is the OSA cycle for when most of us are, harumph, 60?

[Activities](#)

Blue skies

Steve Moody: ... for starters, how about watching Spitfires and



Spitfire

Messerschmits flying over during the summer of 1969 as the film 'Battle of Britain' was being shot at Duxford? I work for easyJet at Luton as a Boeing 737 Captain, having been an Air Traffic Controller for many years after being thrown out of the School, switching to full time professional flying in the mid 1980s.

Angus Willson: You have given a great example of what I had in mind.



Spitfire

I certainly do remember the Battle of Britain planes overhead and cycling to Duxford to see the ground film-sets. I have attached two pictures, but how they came about is a bit vague – I guess I was present when they were hand-processed by *Peter Clifford* or *Christopher Prince*.

I also remember when a proto-type Concorde flew very low over the school. We were fifteen minutes from the end of an exam in the New/Essex block and the room emptied spontaneously to go outside and see it.



On the field, summer 1970

Fiona Wood [Adler]: Wasn't it always hot in the summer in the old days? ...memories of sitting out on the field after exams listening to "In the Summertime".



Fiona Adler, summer 1970

Shân Lancaster [Poynder]: The ice cream kiosk on the edge of the field. Weren't we running it the year of decimalisation? I remember being left in charge of it with all this funny money....

Geoff Barnard: I worked in the Ice Cream kiosk two summer's running. We got paid virtually nothing, so must have been doing it in a vain attempt to gain status or free ice cream. There was one famous incident where the takings didn't add up properly, which was traced to the cash bag being dropped in the lower playground en route to the office, and some of the money mysteriously rolling down the drain. Honest guv!



Ice cream kiosk. *Christine Brown, Gill Kruger [Price], Steve Pitcher, Simon Colbeck* – serving tea, I think.

Learning 1

Angus Willson: In biology, probably fourth form, *John Chapman* valiantly demonstrates the mechanism of a butterfly's folding wings to a less than enthralled class. Simon pipes up innocently, 'Sir, you look just like a butterfly.'

'Get out, Colbeck.'

Indeed, one classic 'Colbeck moment' among many.

Simon Colbeck: I remember resenting his sarcastic 'put-downs'. If he sent me out for making him look ridiculous then I guess my moment of revenge was worth it!



Simon Colbeck in typical pose

This photograph shows a more serious group!



Six-one, from left to right, back row: *Kevin Kinsella, Jonathan Richards, Stuart Fell, Huw Gray, Christopher Prince (great jacket), Jonathan Clamp, Julian Hartley, Louis Mair*. Front row: *Richard Mongar, Steve Pitcher, Jeremy Barker, Simon Colbeck, David Way, David Stuckey, Ralph Berry, Peter Gausson*. Missing from photo: *Angus Willson, Geoffrey Barnard*. Anyone know why?



Michele Wilson [Underwood], Paul High, Louise Harman. Underneath the willow by the grass tennis courts. Photo by *Geoff Barnard*.

Michele Wilson [Underwood]: Suspended just prior to A level mocks for having half a lager in the pub. Summoned before *JCW* in his nice new office behind the dining balcony now our form room. He asked if this was the 'tip of the iceberg' and I hadn't a clue what he was talking about. So much for Geography A level!! Spent a pleasant week at home, got my exams through the post and did them the following day. I had an extra day for revising and I DIDN'T cheat.....

Geography field trip to Yorkshire. Loved *Steven Pitcher's* corned beef hash (we all took turns as chef). Went looking for a pub one evening thinking we'd never find any in this remote village in rural Yorkshire – we only found sixteen.....

Iceland – brilliant! Stunning landscape and scenery. Camped on grassy knoll in hot sunshine, ventured up icy slopes and over glacier and ice bridge during day – found an old tin of someone’s emergency rations – back to grassy knoll and pools of hot water – excellent for washing and soothing permanently wet feet. Downside when I longed for an armchair by a blazing fire with crumpets, was sleeping four to a two-man bell tent, taking it in turns to sleep in the middle as opposed to bent round the side. Morning, crawling out to put on wet cagoule, wet socks and wet boots which were freezing by virtue of the cold night. Dressed thus eating porridge out of a billy-can, with rain in it – and I actually enjoyed porridge for the first time ever or since! And of course can’t forget clambering over the perimeter fence of the airport with Judy Burrows to get a drink in the terminal building, back in Reykjavik where we were well taken care of.

Apart from all this I did work hard and spent many hours in Centre Library listening to Abbey Road waft through the window when I would have preferred to be outside in the sunshine with all those who were – why are exams always in the summer?

Angus Willson: I do remember the geography trip to Pickering in a cranky Dormobile-type van. It broke down on Spurn Head, miles from anywhere, but the sun was shining and David Stuckey and I passed the time gently with the assistance of some smoking substances.



Cyril Mummery, David Way, David Stuckey, Angus Willson, Six-two
Photo by *Simon Colbeck*



Fourth form classroom
Photo by *Simon Colbeck*

Ideas for more contributions:
Geography and Biology Field Trips
More classroom escapades
Lessons remembered

New content: February 2012

On 6 Feb 2012, *Paul High* wrote on the [Old Scholars Message Board](#)

Iceland Expedition 1972.

If you were on it, and there were 14 of you from the Vth and VIth Form, then I would like to meet you in 2012 some 40 years on.

Unfortunately the memory is not what it was so the names that come to mind are Geoff Barnard, (who must be an important geographer these days), Guy Busher, now I hope Dr. Busher (whose mum sent me a message delivered to me on the plane as it was about to take off which said simply "Guy Busher is allergic to horse serum"). There were identical boy twins from N. Norfolk one of whom was called Chris Sparke !

There were one or two girls but I would like the list which appeared in *The Avenue* in 1972 together with a centrefold depicting the 72 mile walked route. I have a very poor photocopy on which I cannot read the writing. Having just retired as Chair of another Quaker School Board I have been clearing out my office and found to my delight a Super 8mm film of the Expedition that alas I can no longer project (no projector). Can it be disced and a sound-track added ?

So how about a reunion 1. In Iceland 2. In Saffron Walden? 3. In Newbury where I live or in Brittany where I have a farmhouse.

Now in my 70th year the age difference between us doesn't seem that great as most of you will be nearly 60 !

In Friendship, Paul High

Angus Willson: I have sent Paul the pages from *The Avenue* and emailed *Geoff*, *Simon C* and *Michele*.

Download [The Avenue 1973 Iceland pages \(5MB word docx\)](#)

Paul High visited *Stephen Pitcher* in France in April 2012. [Facebook](#) photo:

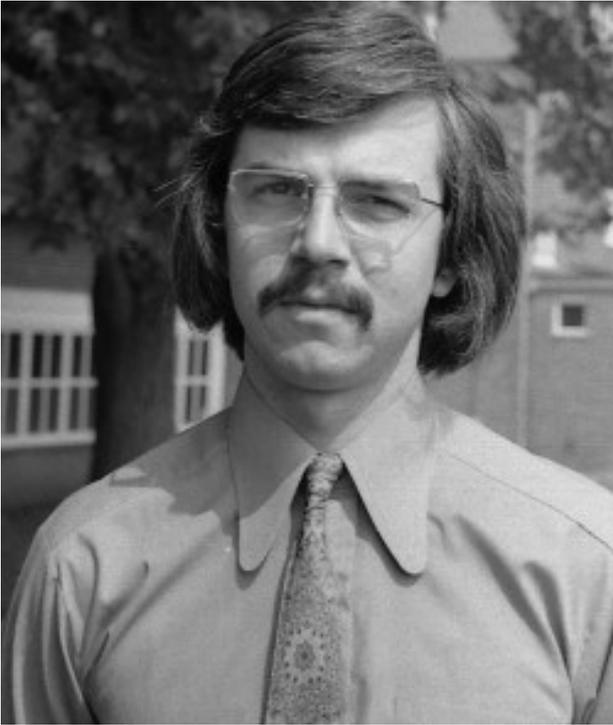
Learning 2



Six-one, from left to right, back-row: *Gill*, *Sian*, *Helen*, *Christine*, *Michele*, *Ceri*, *Jane*, *Joy*, *Helen*, *Anne*, *Bron*, *Anita Thistlethwaite*.

Front-row: *Anna Kay*, *Jackie*, *Jo*, *Adrienne*, *Louise*, *Madelana*, *Shân*, *Pippa*, *Fiona*, *Margareta*, *Sue*, *Mary Sumner*, (American exchange student) Autumn 1971.

This must trigger some memories of the sixth form.



Martin Hugall, biology teacher



Donald Benson, chemistry teacher



Stewart Fell



*David Stuckey, Chris Prince, Jonathan Richards, Stewart Fell on science lab roof
Photos by Richard Mongar*

Reader Feedback

Shan Poynder says: [December 21, 2010 at 11:13 pm](#)

I didn't elope on a motorbike! I just nipped off for a night in London and got caught out by a fire practice. When the roll call came, far too many helpful voices said "here" as my name was called. Whoops. Arrived back to a very frosty reception from...I think... Miss Marriage. Would that name be correct? Shan.

[June 15, 2010 at 9:17 pm \(Edit\)](#)

Thanks, Alex. I have added Mary's name.

Any other recollections?

Alex Grounds says: [June 11, 2010 at 9:38 pm](#)

Fantastic website! The American exchange student was Mary (Sumner I think) who was our prefect in Dorm 2 after Shan Poynder left (we thought Shan had eloped with her boyfriend on his motorbike.....)

[Learning 3 – new](#)

Angus Willson: As my Mum down-sized to a residential home I have a number of items returned to me. This lathe-turned fruit bowl was made from teak and polished with bees-wax. I have no idea in which year I made it. However, I do remember the very dusty woodwork rooms. I also have a pair of lime-coloured book-ends still in use. They have dove-tail joints, with rather a lot of glue, and a copper plate for a base.



Does any one else retain any artefacts or memories of making things?

[Pastimes 1](#)

Pastimes, clubs and societies

Editor: Anthony Ratcliffe
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Margaretta Pagano, Paul High (Stuarland)
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Cover: Jane Hollard
Art work: David Stuckey, Fiona Adler,
Margaretta Pagano, Julian Carr Lipford,
Angus Willson, Jane Carter, Michael Smith.
Photographs: Chris Lyons, Peter Jones,
James Chang, Chris Prince, David Pope,
Steve Pritchard, Jane Carter, Tom Sparkie.

Credits on The Avenue

Angus Willson: From my time at Friends' School I remember many talented and creative people. The credits page shown is from the 1973 issue of the school magazine. Simon Greaves was a huge influence on the two previous issues, as were Ben Cheese and Julia Whatley from the year above. It was great fun working on the school magazine and it involved those in a wide span of year groups. This is an often overlooked feature of boarding education. As the magazine production process had moved from hot-metal to offset-litho we were given tremendous flexibility – we also had considerable editorial freedom.

I have continued to enjoy working with designers and printers in my various roles in compiling and editing publications for use in schools. And this is despite the continuing pressure of deadlines and proofing errors.

Your contribution?

David Stuckey: Am I right in thinking that you helped to edit that rag with *Nick Dakin* called 'drop-out groan'?



Fourth form common-room (1969-70): *Jonathan Richards, Paul Brewster, Geoffrey Barnard, Jonathan Clamp, Huw Gray, Giles Norton.*

Photo by *Simon Colbeck*.(caption corrected)

Simon Colbeck: Louis Mair (see photo in learning) was famous (in my memory) for being apprehended by the police at a twilight Festival of Light (right-wing moral crusaders) meeting on Saffron Walden Common. He had just enlivened the proceedings with loud fireworks. I was a cowardly accomplice who escaped unseen.

Tim Watts: Sad to hear that the cross country route has been developed. I remember walking to the copse on Sundays and lighting bonfires. Talking of which, do you remember the time in the fifth form when we ignited a huge pile of weed-killer and sugar on the playing fields (in those pre-terrorism days you could still buy that type of weed-killer). Wasn't it in the shape of a swastika as some kind of protest against the repressive school policies? Right on comrades!

Angus Willson: You were well known for your pyrotechnic tendencies... including lighter fluid flaming down the concrete stair cases!

Fiona Wood [Adler]: The Pet Shed – I think this formed a dual purpose probably inherent in it's title!! The escape for the homesick child who preferred the company of harmless hamsters or... well, it was marginally warmer than outside!

La Coume – ...eating peaches straight from the tree; getting very badly sunburnt on the backs of my knees whilst digging out the hillside for the pool and having to wear long socks thereafter; and Jonathan Clamp's excellent entertainment on his guitar in the evenings...very atmospheric.

Reader Feedback

Thanks, Simon. Caption duly corrected.

Simon Colbeck says: [December 24, 2010 at 1:02 am](#)

The youth identified as Steve Pitcher in the photo is definitely Paul Brewster!

[Pastimes 2](#)



Richard Mongar

Richard Mongar: Others have mentioned the Biology Field Trip to Yorkshire – what happy days! I don't remember *Denby Allen's* dormobile breaking down but I do remember discovering the pubs. In fact during my two years at FSSW I discovered quite a few pubs if my memory serves me well. I was in the fortunate position of owning a motor-bike – the school provided me with a nice little lock-up store for it (within the bike shed) and let me keep the key to the store. I would wheel it down the car park after dark and ride it

round to a road at the end of the Avenue where it would sit happily until I wanted it. Many trips were made to the *Fell's* house in Newport, sometimes with a passenger on the back – or directly to The Coach and Horses.

It's odd how one's attitude to things like alcohol can change as one gets older. After my father had given a talk to the school one evening my parents and I went back to *JCW's* for a meal at which, I remember, only water was provided to drink (this was actually the practice of my parents until a few years previous to this occasion). I hurled abuse at *John Woods* for this afterwards back in the dorm. And yet now, I only provide water for my guests with their food and refuse to let them bring wine with them to drink. I wonder if it would have made a difference if I had realised at the time that the reason some Quakers don't drink alcohol is not because they are being self-righteous denying themselves something nice, but actually quite the opposite – wanting something that is much better than that experienced by people who drink. It saddens me that so much is lost by the young finding things out the hard way through experience – and many, of course, failing to find the way at all.

There's so much to recollect that may not interest others, so I'll jot down a few phrases in the hope they may stir memories for others:

Pippa and *Bron's* jazz group;

Geoff's party at his aunt's house with peacocks on the lawn (see party);

music appreciation evenings at *Mr Gillet's*;

concerts, possibly at the teacher training centre across the road;

punting in Cambridge;

cross-country running;

Omar Pound's talk;

film evenings;

Andy Greaves and *Nicola Wheate's* talk on the Cyrenians;

the excitement of getting the new Biology lab. Project room.



Coppicing at Ashdon (Shadwell Wood) with *Cyril Mummery*

Photo by *Richard Mongar*



The school cat on Richard's bed

Photo by *Richard Mongar*



Lily Pond – enough said!
Photo by *Richard Mongar*



Say no more!
Photo by *Richard Mongar*



Robin Wright, Anna ? with Young Farmers' Club cow
Photo by *Richard Mongar*

End-of-term entertainment

Shan Lancaster [Poynder]: Can't remember their real names but there was what we called the headmaster and headmistress in about 1966 when I was sent there. We had a concert where one of the little kids sang "Thank you very much for Nurg and Flo-oh, thank you very much, thank you very, very, very much."
Remember that cheesy Scaffold pop song?
(Friends Reunited October 2001)

Parties at Peter Clifford's House

These photographs suggest we were playing at being Bonnie and Clyde.



Fiona, Gus, Nick. Nick. Kate



Fiona, Gus, Kate

Further ideas for comment...

Angus Willson:

The Scouts, The Guides

More on the Senior Literary Society

Rambling Club

Amnesty International

Sponsored walks for Shelter

[Pastimes photos](#)

These photos were taken by *Richard Mongar*.





Sport



“They went on to win!”

Kate Walker [Northam] and *Helen Phillip* [Duddy] in relay handover, Summer 1967.



Paul Brewster after winning a cross-country race, Spring 1967.

Angus Willson: Cross-country running was not my favourite way of passing time, but it was a mass event and did generate anticipation of who would win in each age group. Jogging and serious distance running became a 'big thing' and *Giles Norton* reports that he has had three top hundred finishes in the Boston Marathon. (see Snippets)

The asphalt playgrounds and concrete-floored playrooms made great spaces for roller-skating – four wheels you strapped to shoes, not in-line boots – and it made for fast and dangerous hockey games! The American Hartmann brothers, a few years older than us, had a skate-board, then a real novelty.

I also remember in the first and second year swimming almost daily ('general' as in timetabled for general swimming) and I do still swim regularly, although these days the sauna and hot showers does make it more pleasant.

Shân Lancaster [Poynder]: Hating all games with a passion but cross country most of all, and cheating by getting the bus.

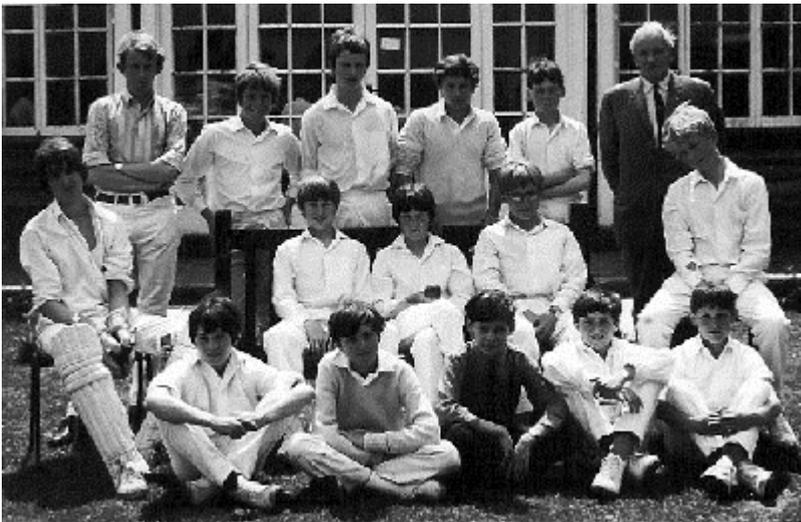


Ann Dickens [Garrod] (1972), Gordon Langford (1971) and Paul Copeland-Watts. Photo by Richard Myatt (1972): "Paul with L for Lister house, not Learner driver! The car is an NSU Ro80 which was equipped with a rotary 'Wankel' engine."

Giles Norton: ... afternoons spent sitting in the cricket pavilion waiting for the rain to stop. I don't think I'll ever forget the smell of the cricket pavilion or the sound that spiked shoes made on that floor.

Angus Willson: The length of 'tea' between innings was determined by the time it took 'KL' Whitlow to smoke a cigarette. *Jeremy Barker* was a handy wicket-keeper (and goalkeeper). Despite the risks, I fielded at silly mid-off and, with *Christian Gayfer* in the slips, we intimidated opposing batsman, a technique now known as sledging.

Cricket team – under 14 squad (Summer 1969). Left to right, back row: John Chapman, Steve Moody, Nick Hunt, Angus Willson, David Stuckey, Kenneth Whitlow. Seated: Jeremy Barker, Giles Norton, Edmund East, Christian Gayfer, Geoffrey Barnard. Cross-legged: Simon Greaves, Simon Colbeck, Ralph Berry (scorer), Gary Weston [1975], Peter Appleton [1974].



Under-14 Cricket Team



The reverse of the photo with signatures. It also shows the results Won 5, Drawn 0, Lost 3. Simon's personal record: Bowling- Overs 18, Maidens 6, Runs 70, Wickets 8, Average 8.75. Batting average- 3.333. Catches- 1 at leg slip.

Giles Norton: I find it difficult to believe that ANY team I played on at Walden had a winning season. Who got all our runs? I clearly remember at least one game where the entire team failed to muster 20 runs.

Angus Willson: Now, that's really funny because I said to *Simon* that I could not picture you as a cricketer: too many arms and legs! Obviously powered for running, rather than the elegance for cricket. However, there might be a clue in the photo. A cricket team had eleven 'when I was at school'. Perhaps, we just kept fielding more batsman!

Simon Colbeck: O ye of little faith! *Ralph* might be able to verify the statistics. Otherwise I'll have to search the archives for the scorebook. I do have some memory of a match in which we were all out for 19 and then got the other lot out for 17. I think I shared an interminable last wicket stand of 3 with *Peter Appleton*. Neither of us could hit the ball often enough or far enough to score any runs but the situation was so desperate we were under instructions to just stop the ball by any means possible and play for time. *Kenneth Whitlow* firmly turned down endless frantic lbw appeals and then when we bowled, raised his finger promptly every time. I had just discovered how to bowl slow leg breaks – very mysterious to 12 or 13 yr old batsmen who slogged and missed often enough to give me several wickets. Of course others

may have played an equally heroic part (maybe even *Giles*) but I wouldn't remember anything about that.....

Giles Norton: Oh great! I am 47 years old and I have spent the last thirty something years labouring under the delusion that I was good at cricket while I was at Friends' School. Now it appears that one of my team members thought my preying mantis body type was unsuited to the sport, and another thinks that "maybe" I made a contribution to the team's success....

The only thing that offers me any solace at all is the possibility that some of my other firmly held beliefs from those days of adolescence are equally out of kilter: maybe the divine Michelle Underwood really did think I was cute and not a total doofus...maybe shorts looked hot on my thirteen year old legs...maybe bedroom seven was a caring environment overseen with gentility by *Martin Underwood* and the big lug who was prefect with him.

Nahhh... Can I have my cricket delusion back please?

Geoff Barnard: Yes, I agree *Giles*.

Making contact again after all these years is a bit of a shock to the system, so let's agree on a ground rule that we should try not to shatter any of those precious delusions on which our early self esteem was built. So *Giles* - you're bowling was indeed terrific (I can't comment on your doofus rating). In fact, I remember taking a bullet of a catch at square leg off you in one game, after which you generously confided that you were glad it was me fielding there not someone else – a compliment which I've hung on to ever since, despite the fact that the catch was total fluke.

The U14s was definitely the high point of my cricket career. In my final year in the 1st XI (there weren't many able bodied cricket players left by then *Giles*) – as I recall, Blocker *Barnard* scored a total of 1 run as opening batsmen throughout the whole season. I don't know if you can confirm this *Ralph* from your scorer's position (I don't think you could say I troubled the scorer a great deal). However I did give the opposition a lot of catching practice and probably wore them out a bit.

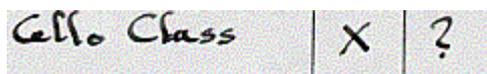
Footnote: At the reunion in 2002, *Ralph* was asked if he could settle these scores. He said he was the cricket scorer only twice and just happened to get in the photograph!

Shan Lancaster [Poynder]: Scary hockey teacher and form mistress. Got a drop on the end of her nose on the playing fields in cold weather. Seemed to like mud and frost and mist and drizzle. (Friends Reunited October 2001)

[Music, plays etc 1](#)

Music seemed a major pastime and more accessible than television.

Angus Willson: With the hype over the Osbourne family 'soap' and the Ozzy's appearance at the Jubilee concert, I couldn't help think of the darkened fifth-form common room with Black Sabbath's first album blasting out. Maybe it should not be the foremost recollection of music at Friends' School, but early seventies heavy and 'prog' rock did figure importantly in our lives. Like many others, my CD collection has included some of those re-mastered compilations from Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones, amongst others. And the other day I heard Hawkwind's Silver Machine on Radio 2 (yes, I know!) in the early afternoon.



School report

On a slightly different tack, I remain envious of those whose musical abilities included playing various instruments. From my pathetic efforts I remember the loose parquet flooring in the practice rooms being a distraction and yet only partly responsible for the achievement of a 'black cross' on my first year report.



*Helen Houghton [Burgess].
Photo by Jo Jones [Atkins].*

David Stuckey: I remember the first thing I got was a violin to scratch and everyone was making a horrible noise except for one boy who used to practice daily in Gibson House at the end of his bed. He made me kind of sad because he was too good and I realized that it was not for me. So practically speaking that was the end of any serious musical education I had at Saffron Walden. Later on we got singing lessons or piano from a young man in a green velvet jacket, I'm not too sure what it was supposed to be. We all stood around the piano but I don't think we even tried to sing. It ended up in a riot with Joy Worrell taking his jacket and trying to wear it while he was chasing her trying to retrieve it. I think the girls kind of liked him.

As a musical illiterate I did manage to join the choir and we sang Handel's Dettingham te Deum (something like that) in Thaxted Church. I pretended to read the music but really didn't have a clue. Anyway that was a kind of uplifting moment for me with all the parents coming to hear.

Of course as a guitarist I found that smoking hash made me play better or at least propelled me forward. It's a shame that in those days popular music was frowned upon in the musical curriculum and there was very little other way forward unless you could convince your parents to pay for expensive lessons. If you were lucky enough to join a group it was about bashing your instrument as hard as possible, and being a rebel as if we were in a prisoner of war camp. Ginger Baker (drummer) says that now he doesn't need even a drink to make him play better because he knows he is now good enough not to need any props. With the right opportunities young musicians nowadays should be able to get the right support structures and confidence building programs so they don't have to rely on such unreliable inspirational props.

I play guitar still and got lost to the music (caught in a trap) and got into West African music, Jazz, Cumbia, Muerengue, Andean panpipe music, Ragas, bhajans, as well as Hare Krishna devotional music. Strange mixture I suppose but you can keep them separate and blend them in later, like cooking... a subji (vegetable dish) you can choose any vegetable (after frying the cumin seeds, ginger, coriander powder, mustard seeds and turmeric) and this will make you a nice dish.

Shân Lancaster [Poynder]: Sitting on a first floor windowsill in a red grandad t-shirt listening to Court of the Crimson King (fourth year I think). Seeing the boys affecting black armbands the day Jimi Hendrix died. Giles

Norton being the star of some play about Antrobus? Watching flickery films like *The Red Shoes*, which had to have reel changeovers, sitting in creaky flip-down seats in the hall.

Angus Willson: The school plays did get us involved. Directed by *Mark Miller*, the cast of *Zigger Zagger* was spread around the edge of the hall like a football crowd. Alongside *Geoffrey Barnard* we played two camped-up roles – very non-PC, I’m sure. The plays were always well-documented in the school magazines. I do remember *The Red Shoes*, probably our first year, and the pretence that boys sat on one side and girls on the other! There was a classic moment in *To Kill a Mockingbird* when spit had been used to ease a squeaky gate hinge and then, on *Boo Radley’s* veranda, a floor-board creaked. *Stuart Fell’s*, brother *Nick*, called out ‘Spit on it!’. Collapse of suspense.



Gill Farrer [Seaman], *Helen Houghton* [Burgess], *Julienne* [Little]. Photo by *Jo Jones* [Atkins].

Jo Jones [Atkins]: Listening to *Simon and Garfunkel’s* “*Bridge over Troubled Water*” every single Sunday evening with the housemistress in Hillcroft (Mrs Goldspink, was she?).



Simon Colbeck: I don’t remember playing chess much (*Peter Gaussen*, left. Photo by *Simon Colbeck*.) but the common rooms will always be associated for me with loud rock music and particular albums defining each year.

Okay then.....Led Zeppelin and King Crimson in the 4th year, Grand Funk Railroad (?!) and Jesus Christ Superstar (a potent combination) in the 5th, Highway 61 Revisited and Sweet Baby James (Taylor) in 61, Actually I cant think of anything in particular for 62 and, by the way, was anything by Grand Funk ever released on CD? Not that I'd dream of buying it of course. But like everything else about living (mainly) at FSSW for seven years it all seems to have been even more 'formative' than the school experiences of normal people who had the more typical socialisation of family, neighbourhood etc to prepare them for the unreal world.

I was crap at any sort of 'performance' music at school and envied David Stuckey's ability to teach himself the guitar – still do as I've struggled to master a few chords in recent years. But I used to sing all sorts of stuff almost constantly until I was cured of it (only temporarily) by peer group ridicule. Rogers and Hammerstein are particularly culpable and it is my solemn duty to remind Paul Brewster that he was similarly afflicted by The Sound of Music before progressive rock blew it all away. Huw's reminiscences reminded me, among other incidents, of a 'musical incident' in the first year. I was in that classroom (near the pet shed) at my desk singing current pop songs to myself before lessons started in the morning. The only other kids in the room were a group of girls who didn't seem to be paying any attention to me. But as I uttered the immortal words "Lets spend the night together" one of them loudly exclaimed "No thank you Colbeck!" at which the rest collapsed laughing and I spent the next 24 hours wishing I was dead.

A minor humiliation and one I can laugh about now but there were many worse that I suffered, witnessed and probably inflicted. *Continues... in Mulligatawny.*

Angus Willson: My nomination for the album for 62 is the double 'Exile on Main Street' by the Rolling Stones. This was introduced to us by Geoff Barnard. The whole album now fits on a single CD. 'You've got to scrape the sh*t right off your shoes.' I saw the Rolling Stones live a few years later.

This reminds me that I went with someone at school to the Melody Maker Poll Winners Concert at the Oval in 1972. Emerson, Lake and Palmer, with the Moog synthesizer and classical pretensions, have not really passed the test of time.

Tim Watts: I have an almost Proustian memory of listening to the Beatles White album in the back of the third form classroom where I also recall pitched battles with those rubber things from the bottom of the chair legs. They really hurt when they hit you, didn't they?

Music, plays etc 2

Fiona Wood [Adler]: Yes, I remember with nostalgia a lot of the music mentioned already. From the early years "A Whiter Shade Of Pale" by Procul Harum (sp?) in the third(?) form and then all the Beatles' albums over the years.. which reminds me.. I have accused my sister Helen of pinching my single of "Hey Jude" for years. She insists she didn't so is there anyone out there was a guilty conscience???? Heavy music playing in the "Opium Den" stirs memories and I have to smile when I tell my 12 year old son that his Linkin Park and other such music is a lot of horrible noise and how silly the names are... I should know better! It's all been before but it was so much better then.... Shan, I remember that you sold us lots of albums once when someone, was it a chef, had to leave rather suddenly from your parents' hotel? I bought a few including one by James Taylor.. and you could understand the words! Memories too of Carol King's "Tapestry"... Granny King as she now is! I still play the piano music occasionally... it's 31 years old but timeless nevertheless. There was the classical side too with Ben Rivers on the piano and the lovely John Catchpole on the clarinet.. a great inspiration. "Pracci" time playing anything but what you were supposed to and certainly never your scales!



David Stuckey

Photo by *Simon Colbeck*

Louis Mair: Congratulations to Jumbo Barker who recently played bass guitar with the re-formed Red Express. Red Express are the seventies funk experience who once tried to save music from punk rock! Then and now photographs at: www.redexpress.net/

31 Songs (apologies to Nick Hornby)

Fleetwood Mac – Albatross *Played again and again and again...*

Beatles – All you need is love *The Valentine's distribution at breakfast*

Black Sabbath – Paranoid *Who wasn't?*

King Crimson – 21st century schizoid man *see above*

Sweet – Blockbuster *Julian Hartley used this to test his 15" speaker cabinets*

Simon and Garfunkel – Old friends *From Bookends, better than BOTW*

Rolling Stones – Midnight rambler *A live recording, scary*

Bob Dylan – Maggie's farm *Intense debates on Dylan: poet or not?*

Jimi Hendrix – Long hot summer night *Or all of Electric Ladyland*

Carole King – It's too late *Major songwriter, reluctant performer*

James Taylor – Country road *You can still hear his words*

Led Zeppelin – The lemon song *Zep great on re-mastered CD!*

Emerson, Lake and Palmer – Take a pebble *ELP has not lasted well*

Deep Purple – Smoke on the water *Darkened fifth form common room*

Steppenwolf – Born to be wild *'Easy Rider' at the flea pit cinema*

Percy Sledge – When a man loves a woman *A smooch as the last dance*

Roy Harper – The same old song *David Stuckey playing, as seen above.*

Jeff Beck – Ol' man river *From 'Truth' my favourite album of all time*

T Tex – Metal guru *They all sound the same anyway*
 Mungo Jerry – In the summer time *On the school field*
 Beatles – Happiness is a warm gun *Alone in being allowed two songs*
 Grand Funk – In need *Loud and crude, who?*
 Elton John – Your song *Read Philip Norman’s biography*
 Santana – Black magic woman *Still playing a distinctive style*
 Procul Harum – Whiter shade of pale *Another smooch*
 Melanie – Candles in the rain or Left over wine, *with passion*
 Francoise Hardy – All over the world ... *very sophisticated*
 Allman Brothers – Mountain Jam *Long guitar solos*
 Ten Years After – Love like a man *With a riff I could almost play on David’s guitar*
 Pink Floyd – Astromony Domine *Even better stuff later*
 Cream – I feel free *The super group, short-lived*
 Rod Stewart – Stay with me *Sing-a-long lads*

New: If you use Spotify, you can [hear this playlist](#).

More suggestions and memories welcomed (Angus)

Party



Geoff’s party, 1973

Left to right: *Peter Gausson, Jo Jones [Atkins], Jonathan Richards, Adrienne Ryder-Cook, Jill Krugler [Price], Stuart Fell, Pippa Bush, Jackie Harbron [Conning], Angus Willson, Fiona Wood [Adler], Jane Tarran [McCready], Kevin Kinsella, Chris Prince, Simon Colbeck, Ralph Berry, Steve Pitcher.*

Jo Jones [Atkins]: After A levels there was a party – was it at *Geoff Barnard’s* aunt’s farm? Everyone had finished exams apart from *Jackie* and I who did Russian and had our final exam the following day. I went to the party anyway, but after being in a field in the hot sun all day, suffered a bad allergic reaction and felt dreadful for the exam. No wonder I did so badly. Good party though.

Geoff Barnard: I’m glad you remembered that party *Jo* – it was a real high spot for me. Drinking cider in the sun and hanging out in the long grass by the old windmill. Shame about your exam!



Geoff's party

Jonathan Richards, David Stuckey, Monica Cornforth [Fine] (1974), Christine Brown, Angus Willson, ??, Chris Prince at front. 1973



David Way, Angus Willson, Jo Jones [Atkins]

The world lay before us.

Reader Feedback

sue shaw says: [May 20, 2011 at 8:51 pm](#)

Hi,

I don't know if it was this party, but I do remember going to a party at Geoff Barnard's granny's house and seeing the lovely sunflower paintings. It was a lovely event.

Hope you are all well,

Sue Shaw

[Party photos](#)

The 'end of an era' party at Barnard's Farm, Summer 1973.



Monica Fine



Angus, Monica, Jonathan



David, Fiona, Angus



Geoff, Monica, Angus



Geoff, Steve, Angus, David, Monica



Gillian Price



Jonathan Richards



Peter Gausson



Steve Pitcher and Pippa Bush



Jonathan Richards



Peter Gausson



Steve Pitcher and Pippa Bush



Gillian Price



Geoff, Steve, Angus, David, Monica



Geoff, Monica, Angus



David, Fiona, Angus

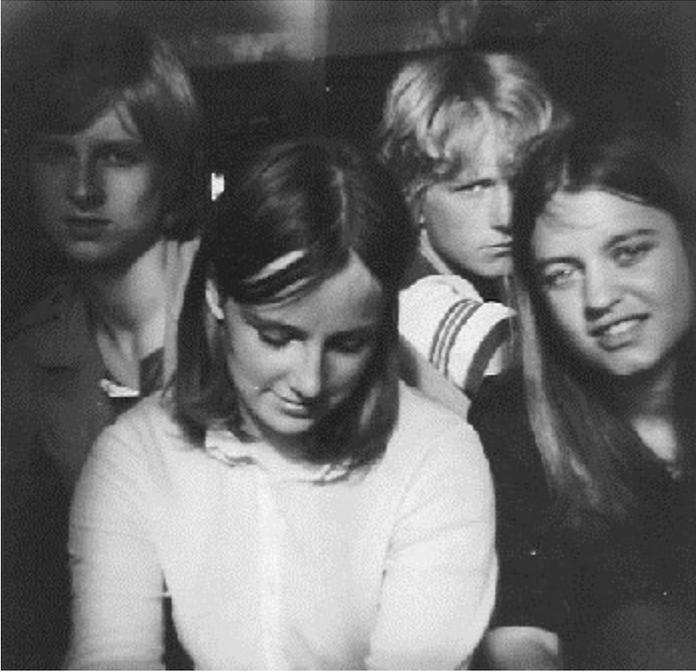


Angus, Monica, Jonathan



Monica Fine

School life



An atmospheric photo, probably in the fourth-form common room.
Nick Hunt, Helen Robertson, Geoffrey Barnard, Michele Wilson [Underwood].
Photo by *Simon Colbeck*.



Veronica Chamberlain, Jo Jones [Atkins], Gillian Farrer [Seaman], Julienne Markland [Little], Janet Stemberidge. Sitting: Helen Lalich [Eltis], Gael Whittle. Photo by Fiona Wood [Adler] Summer 1971.

There is a FSSW school film made by Matthew Robinson on 8mm film in 1963. It is on Youtube in three parts accessed from here www.fssw.co.uk or below.

Some aspects are 'before our time' but others ring true.

Part 1

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=7bwYPvh_niE

Part 2

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kLrlf_XesE&feature=player_embedded

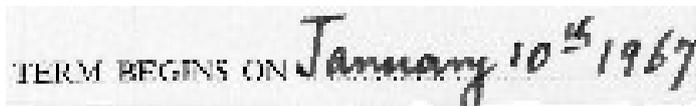
Part 3

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=USzkoXyRWC8

And, then, I found this from 1977.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xU5VBNxTjtE&feature=player_embedded

Boarding 1



Angus Willson: Whenever I pack for a holiday or travelling I think about the anxieties of packing up my



belongings at the beginning and end of every term.

Yet the fun we had in this routine is shown by the trunk squad going from Gibson House to the main school in Spring 1967.

The photo shows *Chris Guy*, who was our bedroom prefect, and *Simon Cannon*.

Shân Lancaster [Poynder]: Hello, are you the curly-haired *Gus* with a Hush Puppy dog? When I see trunks I always think of a basset hound coming to fetch the young master home. Seeing that dog meant the term really was over.

Memories: The little cardboard calendars issued on the first day of term and obsessively ticked day by day till the last. I used to count the days and do endless calculations – almost three-eighths there.....

That punishment where you had to make and strip and remake and strip a bed umpteen times, then lie in it for the rest of a free afternoon while everyone else was out and about.

I was an unremarkable lump who got the sack when I was 16 for going AWOL to London at night. As far as I can remember my sole contribution to school life was organising outings to the Marie Stopes clinic in Godge Street and getting a fair proportion of Six One on the pill.

Giles Norton: It's possible that there are some of you who remember Fred Sessa reading "The Catcher in the Rye" to us, and it is also possible that some of you might have been as impressed by the book as I was, to the point that I have read it, and practically everything else that Salinger wrote, dozens of times. In the beginning of "for Esme with Love and Squalor" the lead character talks about his 'level-headed' wife who points out how ridiculous it would be for him to attend a wedding overseas. I find myself in the same boat.

I won't be there, but the upside of this is that you will all remain about sixteen in the memories that come to my mind. I've already swapped emails with a few people from FSSW and it has been an eye-opening experience. I don't know what kind of image I'm projecting these days, but I'm amazed how consistently FSSW old scholars are interesting people who express themselves with wit and venom. Jean Stubbs *et al* must have taught us despite our resistance.

Mostly, however, looking back generates two contrasting emotions: shame and rage. I'm really sorry for the mean and nasty things that I did and said... to students and teachers. (I squirm when I remember stealing "Harpo's" keys and locking her in the chemical cupboard where we could hear her crying, or the "errrr" count we did one class with Nod Wright that reduced the poor old b*gger to silence...) As to the rage, well, I'm sure that some of you have the same feelings about me as I have about the bastards who made my life a misery. If it makes any difference, I'm genuinely sorry.

But (as the Americans are wont to say..) do you all know what has been the real kicker?

This year, my son won scholarships to two private high schools in the US. He made his decision about which one to attend on the basis of the fact that at one he could be a day student and continue living with us at home, while at the other he would have to board.

He chose the boarding school.

When he told me this I went out and got quietly drunk. As I did so, I spent an hour or two trying to think positive thoughts about boarding school. It is probably not too surprising that the ones I was able to conjure up, of course, centred (phew) around adolescent hormones. I just hope he has as much priapic fun as I had with the divine girls I was fortunate enough to be an "item" with – however briefly, and to their eternal credit, as I was one of the poor sods who wore shorts until I was thirteen. Sometimes I am fortunate enough to have dreams in which one, or – if I am especially fortunate – more of you feature...



Large fourth form dormitory (1968-9). Left to right: *Nick Dakin, Angus Willson, Paul Wallis under 'hat', Jonathan Richards, Paul Copeland-Watts part-hidden by David Stuckey, Geoffrey Barnard.* Photo by *Simon Colbeck.*

Jo Jones [Atkins]: Once when I was going to Poland for the holidays to visit my parents, *Jean Stubbs* gave me two packs of butter to take as she's heard there were food shortages there!

Girls often used to borrow each other's clothes when they got changed after school, and for some reason I didn't like this idea. Once *Jenna Huxley* was determined to borrow something of mine, I refused and she ran off with it. I was furious and don't think I ever forgave her.

I too remember the bed making punishment and felt very aggrieved as, naturally, I had not been one of the guilty, but the whole dorm had to suffer.

Being invited to *Sue Pedley's* home at Little Easton and falling in the lake.

There was a day when the sixth form had to run the school and give lessons on a topic of their choice. I remember giving what must have been a most excruciatingly boring talk about Poland.

Having to write letters to our parents on Sunday mornings.

Getting a fruit allowance (what was it called?) to spend at a greengrocer's in town. (see *Shân* below)

The things I hated most – games, the art room (especially the smell), the labs, discos (or were they called dances?) and Sundays, which seemed to go on for ever.



Julienne Markland [Little], *Jo Jones* [Atkins].

Shân Lancaster [Poynder]: The fruit allowance was at a greengrocers' called Gilletts, I think. There were all sorts of dodges to get anything other than fruit. I somehow used to commute mine into Marvel comics. When I saw Spiderman at the cinema recently I got a most peculiar flashback to bartering with bags of clementines. What about the strictly rationed TV? There was a set placed on a desk in a classroom and we crowded in to see *The Monkees*. The only other thing I remember on it was a film with Lee Marvin singing *Wandering Star*.

The gong for meals used to be rung most artistically by the senior boys who made a real drum roll out of it.

Once there was a sit-in....in beds...in that long corridor by the dining room. It was a protest about breakfast, appalling quality of, I think, and organised by a lot of seniors. After that we got *The World's Worst Muesli* (99 per cent raw oats, two sultanas per bowl) as a concession. (The 1970 school magazine has a photograph of the beds in the main corridor.)

Tim Watts: I don't view my time at FSSW with rose-tinted glasses by any means and remember only too well the misery of freezing cold sessions on the sports field, bullying, terrible food and, yes, the squeaky voiced, red faced headmaster who would surely be packed off to anger management classes nowadays before being allowed anywhere near children.

However, I also have very fond memories of the place and people. I remember the constant struggle of the girls to turn their skirts up shorter and the boys to grow their hair longer (wasn't there a 'not touching the collar' rule?) and watching the dog fights during the Battle of Britain filming. Does anyone else remember the 'bed checks' that the staff would do at night. I remember *Christian Gayfer* walking across the roof to extract me and some boys from the girls dormitory just before such a check and thus saving us from certain expulsion.

Boarding 2

Geoff Barnard: I joined in the second form and remember spending my first year of so trying to be invisible. *Mrs Granville* was the scourge of Gibson House, and *Nick Dakin* gave me the touching nickname of 'boot room Barnard' because of my house job scrubbing polish of the work top in the boot room (not the worst nickname around – there were some pretty brutal ones I recall).

My biggest shock was the first evening when a gang of what looked like 6 foot tall glamour models swished into the boys' common room and sat down on the laps of my 4 foot tall classmates and started necking. I must have encountered you in classes earlier, but you didn't look anything like as intimidating in your school uniforms.

My confidence gradually grew and I guess I was one other those who flourished at the school. Getting taller helped – I remember the moment when I realised I was looking down on the games teacher, Brian Capel. I think he realised it at the same time, and treated me much more respectfully afterwards.

Girlfriends took a bit of a while to get the hang of. Who remembers the valentines day (?) blind date lottery in the 3rd form? A big group of us put our names in the hat and got paired up. But the draw had to be done again because of a technicality (i.e. *Nick Hunt*, or was it *Giles*, got the wrong pairing) so the names went back in the hat. By a remarkable fluke, the pairing were identical the next time except for half a dozen people who had miraculously switched around. I seem to remember being paired with *Jo Atkins* but don't recall the details of our regulation walk around the field (do you?)

Up in the main school I remember the trauma of the deafening fire alarm being going off in the middle of the night directly above my bed – and of raids which involved your bed being up-ended with you in it. And getting your hair cut in the washroom. And throwing super balls down the corridor towards the yard bogs and having them come back at 500 miles an hour and break the window behind you.

The yard bogs are worth a mention in their own right. No doors on the stalls and a strict rule that 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc formers could only occupy certain stalls. Going down there to bunk off during prep was a social event. What would they make of that now I wonder?

Prep during the 4th form turned into quite a contest sometimes – I remember the 'sport' of Dobbin baiting. *Mr Benson* the Physics teacher was easily riled and a fairly soft target, and thus the subject of a lot of grief from us. Reading *Giles'* comments I can share a sense of shame about colluding with, if not instigating, some of the very mean – but at the time hilarious – psychological battery meted out to teachers and classmates. I don't know if we were any different from any other school group, but it was certainly a feature of our time at school which in retrospect I'm not proud.



But it wasn't all bad. Do you remember those epic games of "squash" at break with dozens of people playing – whacking a tennis ball against the wall as hard as you could so it went onto the biology lab roof, or up the steps to the changing rooms, so the next person had to perform a conjuring trick to get it back.

Steve Pitcher playing 'squash'.

Lounging on a beaten up sofa in the 5th form common room listening to King Crimson wasn't that bad either. Or the novelty of being able to make your own toast in 6i – now that was luxury. I remember a lot of time being spent sneaking off across the field, and wishing we could have just a little bit more privacy for our teenage explorations.

Fiona Wood [Adler]: First few thoughts on why we were there ... I never thought to question going to boarding school, partly because that was the decision made by my parents; also I wanted to go because *Helen* was there (did you feel the same about your siblings being there?) but also because I thought it would be like the Enid Blyton books of boarding (all 'jolly hockey sticks') and it would have to be better than the weekly boarding I did up in Northumberland when *Caroline* was due and Mother couldn't drive to school every day! Now that's a whole different story for another web-site... that was bad!

I remember being desperately home-sick for about three days at the beginning when it was dark in the evenings and we sat in the girls' common room being given the low-down on the routine/regime... e.g. bath rotas etc. I felt very low then. After a few days someone (possibly Miss Marriage) must have asked Helen to have a word with me. As my big sister she was obviously not keen on being seen talking to me and just told me to look out of the window, spot someone in my form and go and make friends with her! The girl concerned was *Kate Fuller* (her name has just come back to me). I did as bade and I think never looked back after that! I thought we were all very independent, maybe having come from a pretty disciplined home life. I now see that our independence was quite limited but it didn't seem that way for the times!

Just had a sudden thought about the "initiation ceremony" when we first formers were taken up in the roof for a tour and to write our names on the water tank(s) up there in the middle of the night! I seem to remember a story about *Jonathan Bell* ending up descending into Kenneth Nicholson's study after such a sojourn or is that just apocryphal?!

Michele Wilson [Underwood]: Collect for Sunday evening meeting was annoyingly ten minutes before the end of the Top Twenty on the radio, so we always missed the top three, and one occasion I was sent up to my bedroom to take down the hem of my dress! I borrowed other people's clothes (well, we were so

restricted) even to the point of sewing my name tape over the existing one, but it didn't fool one particular teacher. She taught German – does anyone remember her?

Two boring Sunday afternoons were spent on a trip up the water tower and rambling through the rafters of the school accessed by a bed plus chair (very wobbly). One trap door we checked out was immediately outside the Matron's room.....

Mid-night feasts – one in Croydon house with *Fiona*. We'd got masses of food and forced ourselves awake to indulge! One birthday in Hillcroft with chocolate cake and a bottle of Noilly Prat! Another on the school field and the best of all at Joy's with baked beans on toast and loads of cider. For the last two, boys, I forget who, brought a ladder round to the back of Hillcroft and we climbed out the window all dressed in black!!!!

Fiona Wood [Adler]: Following on from other peoples' thoughts I remember the ritual packing of the trunk to go back to school with the rug in the bottom so everything could be unpacked onto the bed for "inspection". Probably a girlie thing but once we had got the hang of the uniform list and were a bit older we used to sneak lots of extra clothes in and hide them under the mattress until after it had all been checked by *Miss Marriage* or *Miss Miller* or whoever in later years. Jo talked about clothes' sharing... I remember it well as it would expand your wardrobe immensely! Not that we had much room in the early years. Later on I remember the first evening back at school would be spent changing into your new clothes and going down the "Boys End"(!) to look casual and pretend not to be trying to make an impression. I think that the boys were far more attentive in the mini skirt years (bet you chaps remember *Helen Eltis'* micro skirts!) than in the later midi and maxi eras. Then came the great coats which many of the boys wore and which were quite warm I seem to remember!

Still on the theme of boarding I remember that we were not allowed to go into town on a Wednesday or Saturday before we had done any mending from the returned laundry (my how they shrank those school Braemars!). Was this just the girls? If so I shall complain now! We used to get out of mending the holes in the socks by producing the other one as evidence of a job well done! This went hand-in-hand with queuing up for pocket money and finding good reasons for getting more than the allotted sixpence or whatever...Granny had a lot of birthdays requiring cards and extra stamps! Sixpence went a long way when you could share friends' sweets, comics etc. and as already mentioned you could get a lovely frozen Arctic Roll from your fruit account! I also remember someone discovering Archimedes' Principle with a box of Maltesers in the wooden soap dish on the side of the bath...v. soggy sweets. We spent the afternoons in those old baths swapping comics (progressing to the rather risqué "Jackie" when older) and sweets and causing many a flood....

I remember in the first form being pretty cold at night but keeping warm by leaping around the room especially in Dorm 1 where you could hide on top of the door leading to Miss Miller's room and hoping you didn't get caught. Also in Dorm 2 where there was a little bathroom which I think was only used by the prefects along there... we thought it most unfair until we got to the dizzy heights of prefect ourselves! Talking of which, my sister Helen was my dorm prefect for a while...we are both still scarred by that experience! I think that may have been in the days of sojourns in the night which she probably tried to ignore. She does recall finding a small boy in one of the wardrobes once... I don't know who was the most surprised!

Girls and Boys- *Geoff* talked about the practice of walking up and down the Avenue (remembering to kick the Kicking Stone of course!) and I shudder to think of the damage done to some poor lads (and no doubt lasses) when you went once up and down then got your mate to "chuck" them for you or, worse still, write them a note on the back of some scrap paper! Perhaps the impact wasn't so great as I imagine and we were

thicker skinned then? The notion of the Girls' End and Boys' End is funny now... but why did we have form photos by the pool taken separately?



Fred Sessa auctioning lost property
Photo by *Simon Colbeck*



Richard Mongar
Photo by *Simon Colbeck*

Boarding 3



Biology Labs from the field

Angus Willson: In the music section *Simon Colbeck* reminds us about 'Grand Funk Railroad' and also told me how it was used to great effect in a school assembly. I will obscure the name of one person (unless I hear from her), however, taking the stage was...

Ve Chamberlain: *Giles* and [xxxxx] were expelled, around our fourth form I think, for having sex. The whole year was really upset about the expulsions. We felt it was unjust and that *Giles* and [xxxxx] were, I believe, only caught because people were talking about the event afterwards and a teacher overheard – I don't think they were caught 'in flagrante' though those involved may remember differently. We also thought (at least my friends, in their innocence, thought) that it couldn't be true anyway because [xxxxx] had the curse at the time.

I was put up to this by you, *Angus*, and some other boys (maybe *Eddie*?). It was your idea that we should play Grand Funk Railroad, which was very popular in the boys' common room at the time. In assembly I read some reading, which I don't remember at all. I then paused and said as clearly as I could 'This music is for *Giles* and [xxxxx]. It's by Grand Funk and it's called "In Need."' The lyrics included the words "You've sure got a real good friend" which we thought apposite as *John Woods* had proved very far from a good friend. [[Youtube](#) 8 minute track. Ramp up the bass.]

You asked whether there is a connection between then and later events in our lives. Maybe I do still take risks, stick my neck out and then see what 'authority' is going to do about it! I think you are right about the liberal atmosphere at school. I felt confident I would not be punished, and in fact there were no repercussions at all. I think we were encouraged to speak out about injustice, in good Quaker fashion speaking truth to power, and perhaps the staff thought that what we did was a good outlet for our feelings.



Helen Robertson

Helen Kalf [Robertson]: My daughter persuaded me to put my name on the Friends Reunited list. I wasn't sure if anyone would remember me as I only spent three years there. I seem to have a lot of memories of going out with a lot of different boys! Was I really that bad? It all came to a head when my mother found a letter from Malcolm somebody in the year above about some of our antics that she refused to let me return – this coming after her having been summoned the term before to see *Mr Woods* regarding my going to a party in the woods somewhere with *Fifi* (only I was recognised by a girl in the year above) and when she got into trouble named me – I hadn't been drinking anything or smoking anything – but I was out in the middle of the night. That was it – with about a week left of the summer holidays of our O'level year she refused to let me return and told *Mr Woods* exactly why. She didn't even have to pay the term's notice!!

Angus Willson: Letter home from *John Woods* (9 July 1970)...

"I have received a report that Angus attended a party last night at the home of Peter Clifford. Although this was not technically a breach of school discipline as it occurred after the end of term, I am concerned that you should know the nature of the party. The provision of alcohol and the furnishing of the room suggested conditions which could well lead to a serious loss of control and restraint among the boys and girls present."

Of more innocent times, I was reminded that we used to write notes to each other and of the role of intermediaries in courtship. *Simon Colbeck* remembers that he was 'asked out' by letter and replied that he couldn't as he was too busy. *David Stuckey* told of being in the Sanatorium and receiving passionate letters from *Louise Paolozzi* until he mis-understood something in one of her letters and she wrote to tell him he was a moron. It hardly made him feel better.

Anna Roberts: Allocation of a "chore" for the term....I seem to recall having to do "drying up" after lunch on Sundays..which took forever!

The there was bath night... cubicled bath, where the water was tepid, and a cork bathmat to stand on... which was always damp!

Any other memories of boarding school life?

Clothes

Joy Worrell: I think I first learnt to swear, at the age of 11, at the idiocy of a person who thought school capes were a good idea. Not only did I have to put up with the batman taunts of my former primary school classmates – who never spoke to me again once I went to the 'posh school', but it was also impossible to stay warm and dry and carry anything at the same time. The bloody things ballooned over your head at the first gust of wind and let in all the elements, the only way to achieve any level of protection was to enfold the cape in your arms and then wrap your arms around your body. No wonder we rebelled. I also remember feeling sorry for the boys who all had to wear shorts all year round – can you imagine 11/12 year olds going along with that now? The boys froze in winter and the girls overheated in the summer as there was no summer uniform.



Angus Willson: Thanks for thinking of us, but we didn't all wear shorts in the first year. This photograph shows *Giles Norton*, in shorts, fooling around outside Gibson House. *Nicholas Gillett* is taking a photo of *Nick Hunt* who, my original caption notes, is holding *Kate's* teddy. *Ralph Berry* is sitting on the right.

Angus Willson: This must be in our third year as indicated by the jackets. I am meant to be standing on *Jonathan Clamp's* hand, apparently amusing at the time, so I don't know who took the photo. I think it is *Nick Dakin* at the top of the steps and it was taken in winter 1968/69.



Jonathan Clamp on lower asphalt

The asphalt playgrounds made great spaces for roller-skating – four wheels you strapped to shoes, not in-line boots – and it made for fast and dangerous hockey games! The American *Hartmann* brothers, a few years older than us, had a skate-board, then a real novelty.

Jonathan Clamp: Is that really me? Where did all the hair go? *Nick Dakin* worked with me in the mid-seventies but I haven't heard from him since then.



Jenna Huxley

Angus Willson: Fiona Wood [Adler] sent her version with Jenna Huxley and Gill.

Jo Jones [Atkins]: Those awful cloaks and the fact that shopkeepers seemed to think that you were hiding stolen goods under them. Girls often used to borrow each other's clothes when they got changed after school, and for some reason I didn't like this idea. Once *Jenna Huxley* was determined to borrow something of mine, I refused and she ran off with it. I was furious and don't think I ever forgave her.

Turning our skirts over to make them shorter and being told off by *Joy Ashford* because this had resulted in my suspenders showing (tights still hadn't been invented!)



Veronica Chamberlain, Ruth Crocket, Julienne Markland [Little], Janet Stembridge, Gillian Farrer [Seaman], Fiona Wood [Adler], sitting: Helen Lalich [Eltis], Gael Whittle, Summer 1971. Photo by Jo Jones [Atkins]. (Caption corrected 9 May 2010)

Michele Wilson [Underwood]: I was in Boots one Christmas with my green cloak firmly clasped around me and got mirrored round the whole shop by a vigilant staff member, feeling very peeved that she should doubt my integrity. I was however, nursing an illicit bottle of wine purloined by *Ceri* from her home, for later consumption (sorry *Ceri!*).....one summer, 3rd or 4th form, it was exceptionally hot and sultry and everyone was suffering and sweating profusely. Along rolled an almighty thunder storm, EVERYBODY tore outside to revel in a good soaking but I never anticipated the joy (oops!) and hilarity of seeing *Joy's* dress transmute from 'conservative' to an ultra-clingy micro-mini!

This fine group shows their formal wear in Spring 1968.



Paul Wallis, Eddie East, Chris Gayfer, Ralph Berry, Simon Greaves, David Stuckey, Paul Copeland-Watts, Timothy Watts. Photo by Angus Willson.



Michele Wilson [Underwood] and Fiona Wood [Adler], Spring 1968. Photo by Angus Willson.



*Kate Walker [Northam] and Nick Hunt, Autumn 1969?
Photo by Angus Willson.*



David Way, Stuart Fell, Steve Pitcher, Geoff Barnard, 1973?



Ralph Berry
Photos by *Simon Colbeck*

Anna Roberts: The ghastly green cloaks we girls had to wear....made us look likely green penguins, especially over the even more ghastly green viyella school blouses, and green pleated skirts, which we all turned over and over to make shorter... thus making them look even worse as we bulged around our waists!

The grey Sunday dresses..... and sensible shoes! No teenage girl today would DREAM of wearing such a garment.... The constant swapping of clothes strictly forbidden, but somehow we got round it.

Then there was *Mrs Miller* (house matron) who would post mending lists on the pinboard in the girls hall... my name was forever on it... as were many others.

Food

Shân Lancaster [Poynder]: Food is the most evocative thing of all. When I smuggled a friend of mine from home into a Sunday evening tea once she was traumatised by the awfulness of the bowls of beetroot swimming in vinegar, the leathery, dry, strangely chewy lettuce (no dressing – not even salad cream) and the rectangular white slabs of cold pastry with some sort of processed meat filling. We called tea (served in big copper jugs) “char” and there was some special word for butter – tack? I got into trouble for joining a butter-flicking craze – we used to have one huge slab of margarine per table and a tiny circular individual bit of butter each, arranged around it – remember?

If the butter was just warm enough to be firm yet adhesive you could flick it up to the ceiling where it stuck until the room got warm enough to melt it and it landed on the person below. I thought this was very amusing but that thin, blond biology teacher *John Chapman*, who was going out with *Therese Roxby-Bott*, didn't.

The best things they ever served up were boiled eggs and a roll – you could make a hot egg sandwich. Some people used to put marmalade on their fantastically greasy fried bread....but the tinned tomatoes were better I thought.

The tables in the dining room had big cracks in them, full of congealed bits of former meals, which you could excavate with your fork while you waited for your plate to be passed down with its wafer-thin slice of dark-brown, crumbly beef or pale pink pork with a huge bit of white fat dangling all round.

The good thing about all this was that it was dead easy to diet. Very few of us were fat!

Anna Roberts: The truly appalling food which we sat down to eat in that baronial dining hall.... porridge that would cement bricks together springs to mind!

Angus Willson: At the 2002 reunion *Greg Bufton* (1977) reminded me what it was like to be a vegetarian at the time when meals were conducted with table service. It meant the 'veggie table' had a wide span of year groups which he recalled as a great privilege. I am sure that this interaction, combined with a host of siblings, was an important influence on our lives. (For Greg's assessment of the 1973 year group, 'They were gods then, they're still gods now.' see www.cedars.demon.co.uk/fssw77/reviews.html (- link now broken).

For my own part, being vegetarian was, and still is, more of an inconvenience to others which arises from a personal preference, not through high-minded principle. I did eat sometimes meat as a student and in the early years of our marriage but subsequently we opted for a vegetarian diet and have remained so for years. I can be as boring on this subject as any other, but I don't feel compelled to change the world. I hadn't thought of this aspect when considering this collection of memories, but clearly the lifestyle-minority inclusion of a Friends boarding school enabled this choice for many more to follow. These days, you don't even have to sit at a separate table.

Reader Feedback

One Response to "Food"

David Heydecker says: [December 22, 2010 at 4:15 pm](#)

Please excuse the intrusion from someone in the year above. The butter-flicking craze reminded me of the distribution of butter pats (one per person at each table) around a block of marge. There was a period when much of the marge was rancid. Once, we returned our noxious block to the hatch for replacement. What was returned seemed to be in much the same state and someone remarked that it looked like the same block of marge, but on a plate of different colour. We put this theory to the test. An "X" was inscribed- corner to corner- on each of the six faces of this block. These markings must have been obvious to anyone but the rancid marge made several more return trips (at least three, but I remember a stupid number), each time being re-issued on a different plate to that on which it was taken up to the hatch. After we'd had enough fun with this, MD (full name withheld for the moment), a young man of formidable argumentative power even then, went to remonstrate. I suspect the kitchen staff never knew what hit them....

[Mulligawtawny](#)

Memories are like mulligatawny soup in a cheap restaurant. It is best not to stir them.'

P G Wodehouse (*not an OS!*)

Anonymous: all my memories are embarrassing so I'm not sure that I want to prompt recall from anyone else.

Guess who?

'Things that were hard to bear are sweet to remember.'

Seneca

Giles Norton: I have refused steadfastly to go back to FSSW; I hated so much about the school administration and the bastardization of Quaker ideals. Strange really how they managed to **** up such a great premise and such a great environment.

Huw Kruger-Gray: "These were the happiest days of our lives". Discuss. Oh, how that final word "discuss" on one of those aromatic old school exam papers used to fill me with dread. I far rather would try (usually vainly) to recall facts and figures, than actually to try to formulate and then to express any real opinions. Anyway, at Angus' suggestion, I will try to now and, for what it is worth, here are my own thoughts:

It is my opinion that the nature of the school changed dramatically after the retirement and later sad death of *Kenneth Nicholson*. His replacement, who came to be our collective nemesis, complete with that "pink" visage, "squeaky" voice and "new, liberal" ideas about education, altered completely the nature of the school and none for the better, I consider now. I wonder what became of that tape which I recorded secretly of him berating some of us for skipping off in to town, to go to the "Squinting Cat" that day? Certainly, I departed (well, actually, was "asked to leave") with long hair (which I have most of, still), a meagre collection of mediocre O-levels and little real hope for the future, as well as almost no social education. Fortunately, my somewhat limited academic abilities were recognised and re-kindled subsequently by a wonderful lecturer at a college, allowing me later to enter university and eventually leading to a successful(ish) career in the bio-medical sciences, for my sins.

So, what did I bring away with me from my years at FSSW, then? Well, most significantly, more emotional scars and personality disorders than I would care to measure. The incessant and ceaseless bullying to which I, as an easy, feeble, skinny and defenceless target, was subjected throughout my time at the school, reduced me to an insecure, introverted, neurotic, subsequently drug and alcohol-abusing, nervous wreck and it has been only relatively later in life that I truly have been able to over-come these obstacles, enabling me to begin to realise some of my potential. Indeed, I did not spend my pre-school formative years having to fight for my social survival on the violent city streets, but was raised in the relative tranquility of rural East Anglia, which left me ill-equipped to deal with those bullies who had trained in combat at the academy of the urban street corner. I never shall be able to forgive these animals for what they subjected me and other weaklings to, as well as the school authorities for doing so little to prevent all of this from taking place, despite repeated pleas from my parent(s) for them to act. For me and others, there was the additional stigma of being a "day brat" to deal with also, which did nothing to help matters. However, unlike Giles, I was not in a position, alas, to have my wounds soothed away in the delightful-sounding company of one of those several girls for whom I secretly nursed feelings of desire. Ah. Mind you, now...

Some other random memories: being kicked out of the "Railway Fiends" for being caught with cans of beer on a train by "Para" during a society trip to see a shunting yard. Riding my first motor-cycle (a BSA Bantam) around the school basket-ball court and later my second one (a Triumph Bonneville) secretly down from the school to the town Friends' meeting house with no helmet and getting caught by the MOD [since that time, I have owned some thirty 'bikes and currently have a new custom-built Harley-Davidson Softail and a vintage Norton Commando, as well as having Private Pilot's Licences, scuba diving certifications, etc. to keep me busy]. Having to wash mud from the floor of Centre Corridor, after being caught with muddy shoes from a mass breaking in to the derelict water tower and reservoir. Setting fire accidentally (honest) to a desk during a maths lesson. That stupid so-called "Little Red School-book". That famous ("Oz" magazine) "Rupert the Bear" cartoon. Columns. Puni. Sports (including the infamous "Chapman football"). Yuk! So it goes on and on.

Ceri Fell [Jones]: I am compelled to make contact after reading *Huw's* moving tome. I guess I feel lucky not to have been too badly scarred by FSSW, no doubt due to the fact I'm female and was a day brat. I don't consider my school days to have been the best of my life either, I think I coped by staying on the edges of school life. I agree totally about our "friend" JC Woods, who's famous comment "I haven't made it Summer yet", on seeing Kyrkos take off his jacket, still makes me laugh. He was a weak little man. Apart from *Nick Fell*, who I married, the only people we're still in contact with are *Stuart* - his brother, and *Mike Kyrkos*. I had no desire to return to school for this reunion, but morbid curiosity is beginning to take over, after all we all spent many years together, there must be some connections. Best wishes to all.

Simon Colbeck: A minor humiliation (see Music) and one I can laugh about now but there were many worse that I suffered, witnessed and probably inflicted. Despite the liberal ethos and absence of corporal punishment it was a fairly brutalised existence in which weaknesses or eccentricities were often savagely

punished while benign ignorance or indifference reigned among the staff and probably many of the parents. Were 'day brats' more likely to suffer because they were resentfully assumed to enjoy the unconditional affection and reassurance of the families they returned to each evening? Did their parents assume that by sending them to a Quaker school they would be spared the rough treatment they might get at the local state school? I don't think many of the boarders knew much about urban street corners but some of them knew how to fight (physically and verbally) to make a foothold on the unknown planet their parents had banished them to. And, with no parents there to rage at, scapegoats were in big demand.

So, I reckon Huw has done us a favour. Many (most?) of us have reason to celebrate eventual survival as well as fond and funny memories of our years at FSSW.

Richard Le Mare: – you may, or may not, remember me – I was at FSSW but two years below you [1975]. I stumbled across your www site page. It looks a bit like the alternative or honest persons / survivors page. Here, if you want it, is my contribution.

I can't remember a lot of 'good' stuff, I remember being bored, and kicking a soccer ball a lot! I remember grovelling through the undergrowth going to look for someone's dope plant. I remember spending a lot of time at the Wagon and Horses and Gate – I can't imagine how we ever got served, but we did, and served quite a lot on occasions. I remember hitching back from Cambridge so drunk that the first car just pushed us out and drove off abandoned beside the road. I remember being made to stand in the corridor by Capell for talking after lights out, and then him coming up behind me and hitting my head so hard it jarred forward hit the wall very hard. I remember being what I now consider to be bullied by that other games teacher Chris Smith because I hated rugby and got bored with cricket. His antics certainly haven't made me enjoy them any more since then. I remember being forced to wade through 'No Boats on Bannermere' in those English reading classes, taking probably whole term whilst everyone else had done it in two weeks and being openly criticised by Gillett about my reading speed. I've hardly read since! Yes, I do remember Zigger Zagger and enjoying it!!

After having survived several of the worst years of my life I have never been back to Essex since John Woods asked me to leave the campus when I went to visit friends after I had actually left. Whilst I enjoyed the many different jobs I had after I left over a period of about 20 years I had problems settling or making lasting and meaningful relationships. Then fortunately, through the 'Eye loves' column of Private Eye, I met the best friend I've ever had, Ali, who I married and we moved to New Zealand. For once in my life there was some meaningful guidance, help, support, encouragement and direction.

I feel happier to be as far away from the dreadfully unsupportive, unimaginative, un-nurturing and uncaring environment of FSSW as I can be. Now I am happy but not because of FSSW, in spite of it. I most certainly won't be any where near the miserable memories it will rekindle at the reunion in September. To all those that go, have a great time.

I remember being miserable at the start of each term for ages. Feeling fortunate that I wasn't bad at sport, because I wasn't much good at anything else. Hating that bloody cold swimming pool. Those damp cold dorms. That public bathhouse. Those doorless bogs – I still hate going into 'public' toilets. That effing awful food and the rest. And as for 'squeak', well he was as supportive as a clip less suspender and as aware as a dormant aardvark.

Undoubtedly some did have a riotously good time. As I implied I had a riotously awful and unsuccessful time. I learnt what it was to be drunk and hung over, I learnt what both tobacco and dope were about, I learnt what it was to be lonely and independent and I became ambivalent about failure, all before I was 17! (I left with 3 grade 6 O levels – English, woodwork and geography!). And no one seemed to care or even notice. I am sorry to hear that Huw has such awful memories, but I can sympathise. Guess what? Like Huw, things have eventually turned out ok. I've done a fair bit of cycling, some racing (160kms in 5hrs 30min), run a few ½ marathons, a full marathon (3:23), was a moderately good rock climber and got 2 degrees, the

first one 6 years after leaving (there was a fair bit of educational catching up to do, and still is) and now enjoy my work as a radiographer. However, Ali and I still think the environment sapped what confidence I had out of me. I'm sure my environment disturbed me.

Imagine how some of us would have done in a supportive environment!!

I am interested to find this message board and see what others say and feel. In a funny way I am reassured that I am not alone. I hated the darn place and have had contact with only one person since 1974. (In fact I don't think I've been to Essex since!).

Angus Willson: I don't agree that it was an unsupportive environment – I think we shared a lot together. Sure, kids can be cruel. It was a remarkably liberal experience combined with the usual institutional absurdities of community-based life. It needs to be seen in both contexts of the confused grimness of adolescence and the social changes of the late sixties and early seventies. Now I'm into the history project I said it shouldn't become! At a personal level I don't think anyone wants to be a teenager more than once. I can remember events at school which seemed like parts of 'Lord of the Flies' crossed with 'If..' but generally the staff were very tolerant and understanding of our constant pushing of the boundaries. I don't read that as uncaring. *Ceri's* story (above) about declaring it to be summer is funny, but don't most authority figures say ridiculous things at some time or another. Haven't we all, as parents, managers or whatever? *Simon's* questions about the different perspectives of day scholars and boarders are important in understanding the relationships between individuals and between communities. I think, through these experiences, we learned about the nature of society. And there is always another point of view, For instance, one of our year said they enjoyed the freedom of school because they had such a repressive home-life. More views welcome!

'They were the best of times, they were the worst of times.'
(Charles Dickens wasn't an OS, either.)

Reader Feedback

One Response to "Mulligawtawny"

Simon Colbeck says: [December 31, 2010 at 2:36 am](#)

The stuff on this page has continued to resonate with me over the last 8 years in a cathartic way. Memory is inevitably selective, fitting some kind of narrative that works to make sense of our lives rather than providing a merely objective factual account that everyone can agree with but noone really cares about. They need stirring or they fossilise us!

By the standards of the time and by comparison with other boarding schools, FSSW was a liberal, possibly even caring environment but it was definitely brutalising too. My horror at the idea of sending my own children away at the age of eleven brought this home to me. Even if the staff had all been the kindest altruists they could never have hoped to compensate for the loss of the daily reinforced love and attention that any averagely nurturing parent provides. I have a powerful memory from the first year that illustrates this:

Every Sunday afternoon (regardless of the weather as far as I remember) we were obliged to go off the grounds for a walk or a run. I had gone for a run on the standard cross-country course with two other boys and was nearly back when we passed a group of fourth year boys including one who decided to show off to his mates by pushing me into a ditch full of stinging nettles and then pushing me back several times as I tried to climb out. Purely by chance the sole 'Master on Duty' intercepted me as I whimpered my way into the changing rooms back at school. I was terrified of the consequences of 'sneaking' but he persuaded me to tell him how I came to be covered in nettle rash and grazes. He said he was going to deal with it and marched off. It seems this incident was the final straw (among others of which I knew nothing) and the perpetrator was "asked to leave" (expelled). So this kind of brutality was firmly dealt with. However no

teacher ever spoke to me further about the incident, not even the Gibson housemaster John Gillet. I only knew by rumour that the expulsion of the guilty party was connected to me because his mates (who included my dorm prefect) made menacing remarks about what would happen to me for having got RB expelled. I lived in fear of some vicious retaliation for weeks if not months. It never came in any tangible form but it made my life a misery. I can only assume that teachers were completely oblivious to any emotional impact on the victim beyond the immediate visible signs. What psychological self-protections do children find to survive such an environment? Its a question I have spent a lot of my professional life on and I'm still puzzling over why I never told my parents. But maybe I can thank FSSW for making me a social worker...

[Snippets of news](#)

2001-2005

In a missive from *Giles Norton* he referred wittily to those circular letters and the more embarrassing features of the short biography of one's life achievements. (see Simon Hoggart's book) Well, here is the concession to providing little bits of news which do not easily connect to the rest of the loose structure of this site.

This reverses the order of receipt to put the newest ones at the top.

Adrienne Ryder-Cook: My husband just looked my name up on google and found this site! It was fun to see everyone's picture and to read what people had to say. Trust you organized it.

My two years at Saffron Walden were pretty rough....long way from home etc, great need to prove my independence, but certainly gave me a good foundation.
Glad to see everyone looking pretty well at the 2002 reunion. Wish I had known, I might have made it.
Best to you and all you might come across. Adrienne
PS. So glad to see Ceri married Nick! (1 Aug 2004)

Gael Whittle: Married to Mick Henry. Two teenage sons. Lecturer in Fashion Northumbria University. Also teach yoga. Living in Gateshead since 1975. (26 July 2004 Friends Reunited)

Nick Hunt: "hi, gus. have just discovered your website fascinating! almost right with Brighton, 15 mls away on the Weald. when's the 50 yr old reunion? could be interesting. keep up the good work, regards nick" (February 2004)

Penny Maier [Bolton-Gilbert]: I was only at Friends School for 4 terms -Summer term of the first year as a 'day brat' and the second year as a boarder. I have very fond memories of FSSW and have enjoyed browsing the website. I was friendly with *Anna Roberts*, who also left at the end of the second year, and have now contacted her. She mentioned that a few people had asked after me – I was quite surprised as I didn't think anyone would remember me as I was there such a short time. I must say it was a bit of a shock to be confronted by myself in the 1968 school photo on the website! Brief resume since leaving FSSW: Completed schooling in Devon. Went to agricultural college in Aylesbury with the aim of being a farm secretary. Promptly changed to being a medical secretary (quite similar !!?). Met husband in Aylesbury, so stayed here ever since. Have two daughters, both now left home (one in London working, the other at Uni in Warwick). Am currently a self employed PA to a consultant plastic surgeon organising his private practice, and also to a chap restoring a minor stately home which was remodelled by Sir John Soane and where the grounds were designed by Capability Brown, so a nice contrast there. In my spare time I am half way through an OU social science degree – I must be mad!!!

Would love to hear from anyone else who knew me at FSSW.
Cheers, Penny. (July 2003)

Louis Mair: I was much impressed with the Willson website and I feel I have now come to the time of my life when I wish to unburden my soul, confess all and bore my old friends. After leaving the Pink Penitentiary I attended the University of Malawi, briefly. Three years further on I was working on a drilling rig in the North Sea. Such was the nature of saving the world from an energy crisis that I wished I had taken the physical education classes more seriously. I recollect hiding in an upstairs gymnasium with Messrs. Gausson and Hartley. In one corner a frightfully handsome and muscular young man was pumping enough iron for all of us. I did manage to build up the required stamina for oilfield work.

I confess that I even enjoyed the oilfield life at one time. It helped to subsidise a love of motorcycles and a memorable marriage. When poverty and the end of marriage co-incided I remembered the motorcycle that Mr Mongar had owned. I once travelled on the pillion of that machine to the Mongar Estate and back again. Yes, I had faith in the name of MZ motorcycles. That was about 1983, I've owned an MZ (or two) ever since!

Around 1992 I helped to found an offshore oilfield trade union. Being a nuisance in the world of politics seemed to fulfil some inner need. In 1993 my efforts gained me that most honourable award for an honest politician. Do not pass Go, Do not collect £200! I retired from that line of work in 1994.

In 1996 I attended a re-union at that place of painful and pleasant memories. I spoke to Messrs. Willson, Berry and Barker amongst others. Tom Robinson spoke very well on his mixed memories of "The School". I can't say I was keen to go to the re-union, but I was glad I had done so.

I am currently studying Spanish at Aberdeen University. I have a great interest in Latin America. Perhaps Dave the Rave and I can organise a trip together! (June 2003)

Richard Mongar: And after school? Well, I dropped out of poly very early on – worked at The Royal Veterinary College Field Station as an animal attendant on research projects. Became a girls-school lab technician. Got married. Worked at Sussex University as an Assistant Scientific Officer (insecticide research for The Agricultural Research Council). My A' level project on cockroaches got me that job! Became a local government officer. Got divorced. Went to work for the RSPCA as a trainee veterinary nurse by way of a vocational occupation. I have not worked since 1986, although in 1991 I qualified in holistic massage therapy. [I'm happy to give anyone a lovely aromatherapy treatment in Seaford, East Sussex in exchange for a small donation to Oxfam]. I'm currently learning to paint and do a little ceramic art from time to time.

I would particularly like to hear from any single female non-smoking old scholars / Quakers etc. (tel. 01323 – 490184) or e-mail richardmongar@yahoo.co.uk allowing 2-3 weeks as it's not my computer! (January 2003)

Helen Falk [Robertson]: I worked in the City for 23 years, trading and advising in both European Government and Eurobonds. I have now embarked on a second career and have just completed my ACCA accountancy finals. Working for a top 10 company. I live in Chelmsford with 2 teenage daughters. (From Friends Reunited 05/01/2003 10:36:54)

I am sorry I missed the reunion it sounded like everyone enjoyed it. Gus' website is excellent – I found myself in the middle of a photo on the clothes section (I am the one with the skirt turned over rather too much!!) It is funny how looking at it all makes the intervening time disappear. Good to have contact – thank you.

2002

Jonathan Richards: At school I didn't have a clue about relationships and feelings. I learnt a lot from observing *Simon Greaves* and others with wisdom and insight, but it has taken a long time for me to come to terms with the factors that made me the person I was at school. I did enjoy most of my time at school and value the fact that a few teachers, lowerth John in particular, were important father figures for me. Some years ago I was on a course with Simon's brother Robert (then a GP in North Wales). It was led by

Marshall Marinker, father of the Marinkers. We discovered our common link at dinner having argued violently all through the day!

We had a great week with *Steve Pitcher* in France this summer. He lives near Rennes in an old farmhouse with 15th Century barn and 5 acres of thistles (well as chief thistle scyther for the week, that's how it felt!) He is married to Sophie and they have two delightful daughters aged 3 and 6. I have been married to Alison for 25 years, lived in Merthyr Tydfil for 21 years, working as a GP. Mark (21), Lois (18) and Christopher (15) complete our family. I work one day a week as Professor of General Practice in a School that trains nurses and midwives at the University of Glamorgan. I have attached a photo of the family taken at a pre-Millennium party in December 1999, though I don't know if you will be able to put it on the site. With best wishes. (10 Oct 2002)

Geoff Barnard: It looks doubtful that I'll be able to make it this weekend (nice job Gus – the website is turning into a minor classic). After three really enjoyable years at Cambridge, where I was at the same college as *Steve Pitcher*, I moved to Boston for a couple of years – working first in a biotech lab, then later at an R&D firm doing alternative energy research – attempting to convert seaweed into a diesel fuel substitute (don't hold your breath on this one). It then got interested in 'biomass energy' in developing countries, and after a spell in Thailand, spent the next 5 or 6 years back in London researching and writing on things like community forestry and biogas digesters (I'm possibly the only person to have ever part-financed their honeymoon with a grant to study dung burning in Asia). I then got involved in helping setting up a NGO called the Panos Institute, which does information work on development topics, working particularly with the Third World media. About 8 years ago I moved to the Institute of Development Studies, a research outfit based at the University of Sussex near Brighton. I'm in charge of their information programme, and am mostly involved these days in setting up development related websites (see www.ids.ac.uk for much more than you probably want to know on the subject). I met my wife Sally at college, and we now have thirteen year old twins, Sam and Jessie. They are just getting to the stage when I went to FSSW so are mildly amused and rather baffled looking at the old photos on the website. They are much cooler than I ever was, and a lot more worldly wise. (27 Sep 2002)

Tim Watts: I've just discovered the web site that you run about our year and have been browsing it with total fascination and a whole range of emotions. The usual nostalgic responses to some of the reminiscences and photos, complete amnesia about some of the events described and some shock at some of the more negative feelings expressed. I don't view my time at FSSW with rose tinted glasses by any means... (see [boarding](#)).

A very brief account of what I've done since leaving... Having totally failed any attempts to get academic qualifications I eventually ended up doing a technical course at drama school and working in the theatre for several years. Finally tiring of the terrible hours, and having to spend a lot of time with 'luvvies', I drifted into television where I now work as a freelance sound recordist, mainly on documentaries. I was married, now divorced and have a six year old son who is the most important thing in my life.

Feel free to post as much or as little of this as you like on your site, Angus. I'm sorry I don't have any pictures to send. Somewhere, I know, I have a picture of *Ann How* in a Quaker costume but I don't think she'd thank me for posting that one!

Sadly I won't be able to make the Re-union. I'm working on a series for Endemol (creators of Big Brother) about house restoration. It will probably be as bad as it sounds. Please say hello to all the others who will be there. Best wishes. (19 Sep 2002)

Mixed memories

Peter Gausson: It was really interesting to look at the FFSW73 site that I guess you have put together and to read the diverse comments of my school comrades. Certainly I have very mixed memories of my time at school. As the saying goes: it was the best of times and the worst of times. I met *Eddie East* when I was

living in Swindon about 15 years ago; at that time he was married with, I think, two children. He was a social worker and seemed to have a very negative view of his school experiences. I also have spoken to David Stuckey a few times, most recently about 4 years ago. More recently I exchanged e-mails with *Huw Gray* who seems to have a great life in the States. I got a degree in Electronics at Southampton University and since then have been a microchip designer, specialising in mobile radio integrated circuits. About 12 years ago I met a lovely lady and we have been together since. We don't have our own children but she has a son and four grand-children who are great. We have lived in Camberley, Surrey for the past eight years. I think it is unlikely that I will attend the re-union, but I will try to put together some memories for your website. It would be interesting to get in touch with my compadres. Please feel free to put any of this on your website in the meantime. (September 2002, updated April 2007)

Lindy Brownbridge: Married, living in London, working in publishing. (Friends Reunited 10 September 2002)

Michele Wilson [Underwood]: It doesn't seem so recent that I saw Joy. It was back in about April I think. I've been out in Mumbai for three months where Peter has been working on a large water treatment project which is funded by the World Bank. The project should have been finished by now – it's been running for 12 odd years, but is still ongoing. We had to return to the UK however, because Melissa, our daughter, was also returning from her gap year trip and had been away for seven months (diving in the Phillipines, and travelling in Aus, NZ and Samoa). She's off to Bristol at the end of the month, to do Biology, which actually clashes with the FSSWOS weekend, so there's no chance of being there this time. Any new pics of the class of '73 will be gratefully received (technology permitting!). (Sept 2002)

David Stuckey: Lives now in Elstree, Herts. Travelled and experimented with different communities after FSSW A'levels, then spent 3 years in Art School. Like Marcel Duchamp his main interest is breathing freely and he left in the last year of his course. He has had an aversion to 'proper jobs', but had some success as an aunt gigolo. There is no wife and no children. After a few 'mystical' experiences with the Hare Krishnas' he became addicted to Krishna prasadam (food offered to Krishna. there are worse things you can become addicted to!) and has remained friends with them since 1978 and still chants a bit everyday but doesn't follow strictly. He has given musical support to many of their international festivals. After having his brain washed of dirty things in 78/79 at George Harrison's Manor he visited his parents with shaven head, orange robes and no money etc. They thought he was mad and he was forced to see hospital psychiatrists. He eventually escaped and became a down and out for a while in Liverpool, London, Manchester and Cambridge developing an eclectic view of life. There was an understanding of karma and reincarnation and that we earth-beings are here because we have a tendency to want to become the controller, owner and enjoyer (imitating the Supreme Controller) and that planet earth has facilities as a hospital for us to cure ourselves of this madness. All our material accomplishments are like zeros at the time of death, if there is not a spiritual perspective to them. Anything bad that happens to us can be seen as a reminder that we are in a place of suffering which is not our real home, similar to the story of the prodigal son. We are architects of our destiny and can learn/evolve from our suffering if we develop equanimity of mind to so-called good and bad. He gave up the idea of becoming a saint and qualified as a musical instrumental facilitator.

After six years of playing bass and guitar with Peruvians and Bolivians, he visited South America and became a playboy for 3 months. There are many 'Bricheros'...(gringo hunters looking for white meat and financial security etc. over there). I've noticed the ability for natural affection is greater in less developed countries. The original intention was to absorb the culture and visit low profile shamans which he had some success with. He is now learning Salsa and plans to go to Chile next. His work has been in the capacity of lifeguard, guitar teacher, LSA (learning support assistant), illustrator, clerk, driver, post, gardener, busker, musician, labourer, factory worker, painter, assistant to an Associate Producer and digger up of the past. (Sept 2002)

Shân Lancaster [Poynder]: Biog: Left FSSW at 16, went to Elk Grove High in Chicago for a year and learned odd things like Native American History. Came back to Britain and started an A-level course. Dropped it like a hot potato at chance to join Somerset County Gazette at 18 as tea-maker and go-fer. Bounced about local papers till I landed a job at the Sun in 1980.

Since then I've been through an assortment of jobs and papers. Currently freelancing all over the place.
Live between Brighton and London. Single, no kids.
No proper qualifications (got driving licence at 5th attempt).
Fond of gardening and being a wicked landlady.
Will that do?
Shan. (Sept 2002)

Huw Kruger-Gray: As with Giles, I have spent over eight years now living over here in the Colonies (ie the jolly old US of A), the last five of which have been in Boston, working with a small bio-technology company. My only regret over finally "selling out" and departing the academic world, being that I had not done so some ten years previously! However, I will not apologise for my use of any so-called "American English" (now there is an oxymoron, ha ha), for were I ever to use any such vernacular, my dear aged Mother (who recently received her own OU BA degree at the ripe old age of 81) surely would dis-inherit me instantly! So, will I be there in lovely Saffron Walden for the big re-union? Indeed, I shall hope to be (probably only courtesy of air-line frequent flyer miles) and to see just how some of you have turned out, after these past thirty+ years. Mind you, heaven knows where I shall stay there now, more than likely in my hire car! I have kept in touch with just two of my old school friends (yes, I did have a couple) over the years and, as Giles has said, have recently been in touch with several more of you, because of all this. My, what an eloquent and interesting bunch of people many of you do seem to have become. I shall look forward to seeing some of you again, very soon. Were these the "happiest days of our lives" then? It is up to each one of us to draw our own personal conclusions, but for me...

Simon Colbeck: Its impossible to summarise what has happened to me since (without writing an essay which would inevitably be handed in late or never) so I'll try to be brief and bland. I trained as a teacher but most of the time I've been a social worker and sometimes a manager in various local authorities and latterly in the fostering and adoption field. I currently work for Harrow's Fostering Team 3 days a week and do some lecturing in Early Childhood Studies at West Herts College. I've been married to Emily for 12 years. She's a full time teacher and we've got 2 kids, Lucy (14) and Sam (12), who would never dream of going to boarding school so we all live happily in the outer suburbia of Croxley Green near Watford. Please feel free to put all or any of this on the website and I hope to read some more gripping stuff before 28th! I also look forward to catching up with you and many others at the reunion. (Sept 2002)

Shân Lancaster [Poynder]: I can't get to the get-together – working every day that weekend – hope you take pics of everyone and put them on your website. Now a journalist. So is *Margareta Pagano*, she's a City writer and I bumped into her in Wapping once years ago. (Aug 2002)

Helen Philip [Duddy]: 'Might be at the reunion for a short while but other commitments that weekend may make it difficult' . Love Helen. (Aug 2002)

David Stuckey: Probably I won't be able to make it for the reunion but we'll see. Are you going? Are you still a vegetarian? I read yesterday something by Chrissie Hynde (Pretenders), saying that she likes to associate with vegetarians because they are intelligent! Well, I can get your association by email at least! *Louise Paolozzi* was living practically opposite me in Caversham Road, Kentish Town for a short while and she mentioned your good self. (2 August 2002)

Angus Willson: I have been married to Margaret and living in Kent for over twenty years. No kids. I taught in secondary school for nine years and worked in the education advisory service on learning resources about the Channel tunnel from the start of construction to beyond the opening. Since, I have worked in a few small organisations developing further material for use in schools and colleges. (August 2002)

Joy Worrell: Had lunch with Michele a few weeks ago, for the first time since we left school, we must all be at 'that age'. (July 2002)

Jonathan Clamp: I have been married to Alison for five years and we are expecting our first baby in August. I have three children from a previous marriage who are all quite grown up now (Rebecca 23, Laura 21 and Michael 18). I am intending to go to the re-union so I hope to see you there. (June 2002)

Steve Moody: We're hoping to be at the School for some of the reunion, but I'll be working that weekend which could mean being free either in the morning or afternoon or away for the whole weekend abroad, I won't have details until the middle of the previous month.

Erica [Way] and I have been married nearly 24 years, live in Leamington Spa and have 2 kids: Michael 11, who was born with major problems due to a genetic disease called Crouzon's Syndrome, and Catherine age 8 ... who's pretty 'normal' whatever that is. Both are IVF ['test tube'] babies hence their relatively young ages compared to how long we've been married. I work for easyJet at Luton as a Boeing 737 Captain, having been an Air Traffic Controller for many years after being thrown out of the School, switching to full time professional flying in the mid 1980s. (June 2002)

Madalena Argyraki: work freelance in publishing. I am married with two teenage sons. (Friends Reunited 29 April 2002)

2001

Anna Roberts: I left FSSW in 3rd form....1969 I think...finished schooling in and around Burwell and Cambridge area. After leaving school...qualified as a nurse. Met and married an American in USAF and moved to USA (California) for several years...working in a drug rehab unit.

When I got divorced, returned to UK..... working as a District Nurse around Burwell, Cambridge & Newmarket.

Currently living in North Wales...where I work as a District Nurse Teamleader....and live up a mountain with 7 cats!

Would be great to hear from anyone who knew me at school.. or indeed previous work places! (Friends Reunited 17 March 2002)

Susan Marriage: Footloose and fancy free, living in London. (Friends Reunited 29 November 2001)

Jo Jones [Atkins]: Took a degree in Russian and Computer Science at Aston University. Worked for eight years for Logica in London. Married to Mark, two teenage children, working part-time now as a library assistant. Living near Colchester and have a large garden (1 acre). Hobbies are amateur dramatics and bell-ringing. (Friends Reunited 4 November 2001)

Reader Feedback

2 Responses to "Snippets of news"

sue shaw says: [April 8, 2011 at 8:18 pm](#)

I really enjoyed reading all these entries and finding out what you all did with your lives. It brought back school and I could picture each person vividly. I have variously been a journalist/editor, teacher, painter and decorator, egg-packer, playworker and most recently (and best of all) a stay at home mum (a rather old one, which has just enhanced the experience for me). I have a lovely daughter, Rosie aged 10, a wonderful son, Bizu, aged 5, and a dear husband, Geoff. I am currently working on my second children's book as I would like to be a writer when I grow up.

Sue Shaw

Fiona Wood says: [May 22, 2010 at 11:02 pm](#)

I spent a year in France after leaving FSSW looking after children and then took a Law degree in Liverpool where I met my future husband. Having decided not to pursue a career as a solicitor or barrister I joined what was then Peter Lord (part of Clarks' Shoes) on a graduate management scheme. After a year managing shops I moved to the Personnel (now Human Resources!) department and rose to the dizzy heights of Retail Personnel Manager before leaving in 1990 after exactly 13 years to the day. Some consultancy work followed whilst my son, now nearly 20, was growing up. We live in Wiltshire and I spend a good deal of my time taming the garden and singing in a local choir giving a few concerts a year to raise money for local, national and international charities.

I attended the 2005 reunion and was delighted to meet up with so many "old" friends! I was one of the obviously lucky ones to have largely enjoyed my time at FSSW but, although I am saddened by some others' experiences I am not unduly surprised. Our needs and experiences were obviously very different. Reading everyone's comments has been very thought provoking...

Timeline

	This site	School life	The wider world
1996-67 1st year	Gibson House photo		'Swinging London' Aberfan disaster Donald Campbell dies Torrey Canyon Six-day war
1967-68 2nd year	Filming of Battle of Britain	Kenneth Nicholson retires	First heart transplant 'I'm backing Britain' Grosvenor Square Martin Luther King killed Paris 'month of the barricades' Bobby Kennedy killed
1968-69 3rd year		John Woods joins Haydn, Te Deum Kenneth Nicholson dies	Prague spring Mexico Olympics Nixon elected Concorde first flight First moon walk
1969-70 4th year	<i>In the summer time</i> , Mungo Jerry, No 1, 13 Jun 1970	Antigone Bach, Mass in B Minor	Woodstock-Isle of Wight-Altamont Easy Rider US troops in Cambodia Heath re-elected
1970-71 5th year		The Rape of the Locks Handel, Dettingen Te Deum	Monty Python's Flying Circus Decimal currency introduced Astronauts drive on moon
1971-72 6 _i	Boys' photo	Emergency lighting Brahms, Requiem Joy Ashford leaves	'Bloody Sunday' Britain joins EEC Nixon visits China Direct rule imposed Poulson enquiry
1972-3 6 _{ii}	Party at Barnard's Farm	Ena Evans joins Verdi, Te Deum	Munich Olympics Bombing of Hanoi

	Pastimes Photos	Zigger Zagger	Nixon re-elected Vietnam war ends 'Unacceptable face of capitalism'
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Can you suggest any significant additions for this site, school life, or the wider world?

Words wanted

There is still plenty of scope for adding to these memories. This selection of photos by *Fiona Wood* [Adler] need some background – or you can suggest a whole new section...

Please send to *Angus Willson* by email
angus.willson [at] btinternet.com



Gael Whittle



Pippa Bush

Does anyone know who is on the horse-box?
Or those two in the background with their arms folded?



Gus - Tug of war



Nick Hunt



Kate Northam 1969

Reunion

How about planning another reunion for May 2015? The year most of us turn 60!

I know some people prefer an off-site location, but to others a visit to the school and town is also interesting.

What do you think?

Reunion 1996



A good opportunity for a Greaves family photo in front of the cricket pavilion. *Simon* is, of course, number 3.

Angus Willson: Apparently, it was one of the best attended reunions for many years. I found it both fascinating and highly amusing. The school itself is, of course, very different but stimulated the memory of forgotten places. Most of all it was great meeting people.

I also met the following people: *Ralph Berry*, *Paul Copeland-Watts*, *Peter Clifford*, *Jeremy Barker*, *Sue Watkins [Pedley]*, *Jo Jones [Atkins]*, *Kate Walker [Northam]*, *Annie Haynes [Filgate]*, *Michele Wilson [Underwood]* et al. And *Fiona Wood's [Adler]* sister, *Caroline*, who was surprised to be recognised.

www.oldscholars.com has a page of comments from people who attended the reunion in 1996, or did have up to the time of the 2002 reunion.

Reunion 2002

People from our year who attended: *Jo Jones [Atkins]*, *Ralph Berry*, *Paul Brewster*, *Helen Houghton [Burgess]*, *Pippa Bush*, *Ve Chamberlain*, *Jonathan Clamp*, *Simon Colbeck*, *Jackie Harbron [Conning]*, *Paul Copeland-Watts*, *Ruth Crocket*, *Huw Kruger-Gray*, *Bronwen Lewis*, *Steve Moody*, *Margareta Yadi [Pagano]*, *Celia Redgate [Pitstow]*, *Angus Willson*. Also spotted in *The Railway*: *Jeremy Barker* and *Peter Clifford*.

Angus Willson: Some quick observations and 'overheards' for those not there...

- * *Simon Colbeck* to *John Chapman*, 'What subject did you teach?'
- * Everyone still saying, 'Jean Stubbs looks just the same.'
- * *Pippa Bush*, for looking just the same. (see below)
- * 'My best teaching years were at this school,' *Peter Cutler*.

- * A rainbow formed in a small cloud above the silence of the closing ceremony.
- * Ralph Berry, the niftiest mover on the dance floor.
- * The new head, John Waters, joined 'The Lost Souls' for three numbers on guitar.
- * Simon Colbeck apologising for reverting thirty years and being rude to Paul Copeland-Watts. (What he said is too embarrassing to repeat.) And, later, blaming me!
- * John Chapman, 'We have retired.' Therese adding quickly, 'I retired early.' (and she is still looking good!)
- * 'The sun dial is GMT, not BST.' Or, allegedly, half an hour out. Either way, it is on the front lawn and in the shadow of the main building for at least an hour in the middle of a late September day.
- * A visit to Hillcroft, now a private house.
- * Seeing Peter Clifford in a Hawaiian shirt, and on Guinness and Bailey's chasers in the Railway, with his wife.
- * Paul Brewster as a residential care manager for the local authority inspected the boarding accommodation a few years ago.
- * Houses stretch from the school grounds at the end of the new Avenue for miles on what was the cross-country route to the twin oaks and the copse. (comment in pastimes)
- * The playing fields do not seem as large as they were.
- * Maggie Yadi [Pagano] confirming, 'it's all in the attitude.'
- * The swimming pool has re-opened with a new roof. The changing rooms have not changed but are due for refurbishment this year.
- * Sad news that Lou Paolozzi has MS.
- * Hearing from Lorna that Sally Benson is unwell.
- * Paul Copeland-Watts saying he wasn't sure which march to go on, the Countryside Alliance or 'Stop the War'. (eh?)
- * Hank Adams, a West Town exchange student, (1970 year group) came over and was remembered as having shaved his head in protest of inconsistent hair length rules.
- * That most people are on a third or fourth-phase of their 'career'.
- * Rumour that Nick Hunt lives in Brighton.



Simon Colbeck

Simon Colbeck: Even the longest conversations seemed frustratingly brief and I was left with endless further questions for every one I had started off with..... a bit like fitting together some of the edge pieces of a large jigsaw and then having all the rest scattered again.....wondering whether to leave it all on the floor or have another go. But I really enjoyed seeing everyone anyway and I hope the website will keep the whole thing going and maybe we can meet up in a less crowded place. I don't feel like I need to go back to FSSW itself for at least another decade.

The OS message board has responses to the reunion from other year groups.



Art Room



Changing Room



Peter Cutler, Pippa Bush



Huw Kruger-Gray

Responses from those not there...

Tim Watts: Just a quick message to say thanks for posting all the picture on the web site so amazingly quickly. Now I really am sorry I didn't make it. It was fantastic to see all those faces again, only slightly changed! I was amazed to see the pictures of the staff especially *John Gillet* who I was very fond of (in good way of course!) He did inspire me with a love of literature that has remained with me. He must be quite old now. Do you have any idea how I might get in touch with him?

I was equally astonished to see *John Chapman* and *Theresa Roxby-Bott*. Didn't we all have huge schoolboy crushes on her? Who was *Paul High*? I don't remember him at all.

The news about *Lou Paolozzi* is very sad. I hope she can get through it and has the support to do that.

Giles Norton: I can't believe what a junkie for photos of my classmates I have become. Surely to God, you all must have taken more pictures? *Huw* has a camera in every picture. Did he never raise it anger? Can't we see *Steve Moody* chatting to *Bronwen Lewis*? or *Simon Colbeck* demonstrating the fancy new doors on the boys bogs? What about *Pippa Bush* – damn her, she hasn't changed a jot – sneaking a glass of Woodpecker cider? (Who's her life-partner anyway? *Dorian Gray*? She has no right to look that young.) Well, there you have it. Feed us all more photos – please?

Fiona Wood [Adler]: ...and to say how much I appreciated the photo gallery so far... growing older very gracefully I see! (Thanks, *Fiona*, no-one mentioned getting older all weekend. *Angus*.)

Oh, and to say the music teacher *David Stuckey* referred to and who gave you such stunning marks for cello was *Ben Rivers*.

Michele Wilson [Underwood]: Not enough photos – was everyone camera shy? *Huw* and *Pippa* are unmistakable but I really can't fathom who the people in the photo-gallery are!

Jonathan Richards: What a great site/sight! Thank you. I didn't come to the reunion because I'm not [nickname] any more. On previous visits to *Walden* many years ago, I was put straight back into that character... Having worked through the site, I wish I had attended, and if there is another reunion, please let me know. (see snippets for news)

Shan Lancaster [Poynder]: Thanks for doing a wonderful job on the reunion write-up. Like *Giles* I am dying to see more pix. I attach one of me in case you want to expand the photo gallery to include slackers who couldn't make it on the day. Sorry about the pint...can't imagine how that got there. I must've been holding it for someone. The bigger picture you are building up is fascinating. I simply don't remember much of it but bits and pieces sit there in my memory quite out of any proper context – like a flashback to sending

wicker laundry baskets full of dirty linen thundering down the stone stairs with a shove instead of carrying them as we were supposed to, and scattering small kids like skittles. Please keep adding to it!

Tercentenary

The Reunion 2002 was a special event as it coincided with the tercentenary of the school.



The School on the Hill

From the OS message board:

"Always one to give praise where it is due and without wishing to sound as though I have been paid to say it, I have just received my copy of School on the Hill, and it is a very fine book indeed. It is beautifully produced with lovely brown photos, varied text in lay out and content and really is an easy and interesting read. It ought to spark off a volume two ! Anyway, this is really a prompt to anyone who hasn't heard of it or thought of buying one to do so now ! It would do justice to any good coffee table! Seriously, well done to Hilary and all those others who made contributions. Looking forward to the weekend."

Jan Thomas [Willson] 1968

Orders can be placed on www.oldscholars.com [opens in new window]



Tony Newton

Tony Newton (1955) The Rt Hon Lord Newton of Braintree, OBE

Photo by *Simon Colbeck*

[Reunion 2002 photos](#)



Maggie, Bron, Pippa



Camping



Maggie



Brighton Beach



Angus and Steve



Huw and Paul



Bron and Pippa



Reunion 2005

“Teenage dreams are hard to beat”

For those who have and those who are about to... turn 50, a special gathering of the 1973 year group took place at the Eight Bells on 21 May 2005.



At the Eight Bells

Attended by

Geoff Barnard

Ralph Berry

Paul Brewster

Monica Cornforth [Fine, 1974]

Ve Chamberlain (who is a year younger, but had to mention it!)

Jonathan Clamp

Simon Colbeck

Gill Farrer [Seaman]

Jo Jones [Atkins]

Steve Moody

David Stuckey and Erika

Angus Willson

Fiona Wood [Adler]

Joy Worrell

Helen Houghton [Burgess], Steve Pitcher and Jonathan Richards met up with us earlier in the day.

Interested but didn't quite make it this time...

Kevin Kinsella
Shan Lancaster [Poynder]
Celia Redgate [Pitstow]
Sue Watkins [Pedley]



Mary Mileson (OSA President 2005) organised an OS, staff and students choir.

The passage of time evaporated as we settled into easy conversation about past and present. It was lovely to see Joy who has recently returned to living in Saffron Walden and had been coaxed to attend by Fiona. She was on good form, sharp-tongued as ever and unforgiving of those little boys with a breast-fixation. (OK, so that's half of the year group.) Monica enjoyed herself in taking advantage of her honorary '73 status from being a regular presence in the Boys' sixth form common rooms. Geoff really did have his birthday at the weekend. Jonathan gave a little guitar-accompanied singing and rather rashly confessed that the first song he wrote was about Joy. What a smoothy! David and Erika have a baby on the way and we wondered if we have any grandparents in the year group. Jonathan and Gill declared a 26 and a 27 year old off-spring respectfully. And Jonathan has started again. Steve was able to join us because the bad-weather wiped out the cricket but we still are not satisfied with his non-appearance in that airline programme. I am uncertain how Gill and Helen manage to look so young but Paul's salt-and-pepper designer stubble and my silver hair are a give-away. For a brief spell, Fiona went into Head Girl mode and proposed a huge thank you to Jo for organising us. Another get-together was suggested after an, as yet, unspecified interval and Ve offered her house in Pinner. If you weren't there your ears may have been burning. So, let's hear a defence from the person who, it was said, was sick on the stairs at Robin's End after a sherry with John Woods.

On Sunday morning Joy phoned Jane Macready in Scotland who was surprised to be passed to both myself and Fiona.

That's all from me for now. Do send your comments and photos, cheers, Angus.

Fiona Wood [Adler]: So...arriving in Saffron Walden on the Friday p.m. having been warned by my landlady of the one-way system (of course there would be one now) I found myself nervously ringing Joy's doorbell wondering after thirty plus years how we would find each other. With two heads perhaps? I don't know what makes one apprehensive but as she opened the door it didn't take long once admitting the same for Joy and I to quickly establish the pattern of spending at least five minutes summarising thirty plus years of events before lapsing into nostalgia and regressing to anything between third and fifth form humour. I needn't have worried.

This pattern continued on Saturday when I met Jo and Ve going into school and finding the Assembly Hall (and indeed most of the rest of the school) largely unchanged in essence. It was good meeting up with Mary Mileson again and we thoroughly enjoyed the rehearsals and performance of various pieces which had mostly been sung in school before but for me not since then and not as an alto! (something to do with age, as always)

What did surprise me, although on reflection probably naively, was that many of the memories I had were not equally shared by others. There were, of course, many that we did share and lots of those are recalled on the web-site but did I imagine going up into the roof as a sort of initiation ceremony and scratching my name on the cold water tank? Regrettably we found out that the old tank has recently been replaced so no way of checking and all that graffiti no doubt sent for scrap.....what a shame. And what about the locusts under the cups at breakfast time? I'm sure it was all the boys who stood on their chairs screaming!

During tea in the Dining Hall more and more of us arrived and gathered around one table and the noise level gradually increased likewise. High spirits and childish behaviour continued on Saturday evening at our meal (yes I did resume Head Girl mode to thank Jo but modesty forbade Gus to mention that I also thanked him for all his sterling work on the web-site which although difficult to read at times mostly contains light-hearted revelations which keep us happy). I hope the hysteria which occasionally engulfed our end of the table was forgiven by any having more erudite conversations but, with apologies to Jonathan (great guitar playing by the way) I will now only have to mention "being big in the gurkas" and Joy will no doubt once more be collapsing in a heap....it's O.K.; laughter is very therapeutic!

And that's what the week-end was for me. Great fun, very therapeutic, lovely to meet so many friends again and I will no doubt keep in touch with many of them.

And finally. WHO HAS GOT MY COPY OF "HEY JUDE"??!! No-one admitted to it over the meal but I'm sure I saw a guilty face...!

Jonathan Clamp: I had a great evening at the reunion the other day it was great to meet up again with some very special old friends.

The photos on your web site serve as a wonderful reminder of a perfect evening.

I hope my 'travel guitar' didn't sound too terrible (not the ideal instrument for performing!).

I have to correct you on one point though; although I did write a song when I was 12 years old about my hopeless unrequited love for Joy, it was not the one I sang which was in fact written by Don Mclean.

It was great to see David after all these years complete with family to be! (If he needs any advice on nappies. teething or potty training tell him to get in touch).

Talking of getting in touch; could you please let me have the e-mail addresses of those who attended?

Keep up the good work with the web site!

David Stuckey: I was very nice seeing you all yesterday. Thank Steve Moody or the group for paying for our soups!

Monica Cornforth [Fine]: Just a note to thank you for inviting me to your reunion on Saturday. Is it really 32 years? Anyway it was a fantastic evening and it brought back some great memories. I'll look out for your download list (seeing as my musical tastes haven't moved on in 30 years...) hope I see you within the next 32...we'll both be lucky to still be breathing by then!

Joy Worrell: Hello everybody. I just wanted to say how great it was to see you all again and how glad I am that I came.

Although I can't imagine why any of you would visit SW, other than for a reunion, if you do you know where I am now if you're in need of refreshment.

And for those who didn't make it back to mine, phone for directions.

Responses – those unable to attend



Christian Gayfer

Ceri Fell [Jones] – “we will be showing our nags in Devon. Have fun!!”

Christian Gayfer – new contact, living in Canada.

Adrienne Ryder-Cook – “will probably in the States... you never know”

Richard Mongar – “At the moment it looks very unlikely that I'll be coming up to see you all.”

Julienne Markland [Little] – “I'm sorry but I won't be able to be with you at the reunion/50 year bash. Have a great time and take lots of photos. Remember me to everyone.”

Reminder: email addresses are not published on this site, but are available from Jo or Angus. There are numerous changes since 2002.

[Reunion 2005 photos](#)

Meeting up at The Eight Bells



Geoff Barnard



Jonathan Clamp



Simon Colbeck and Ralph Berry



Simon Colbeck



Brian Cappel and Chris Smith



Jonathan Clamp



Jo Jones and Fiona Wood



Simon Colbeck



Simon, Ve, Gill Seaman, Paul Brewster

Reader Feedback

Richard Myatt says: [February 20, 2011 at 6:22 pm](#)

The picture of Brian Capell and———, the —— is Chris Smith, who replaced Brian as FSSW Games Master! Also Ann Farrell has sent me over 200 pictures from when in school, including Stephen Pitchers YG'71 sisters. Are you still in touch with Steve? Hope to plan a YG'71 reunion... discussion with Gwen Jamea, Ann Farrell, Chris Barber, Garth Coupland, Roger Lenk, Neil Stuart so far. Richard Myatt'yg71 &YG'72. Tel 07974083639

[About](#)

Friends' School, Saffron Walden, Essex.

Memories of 1966-1973.

It was over thirty years ago, but a boarding school experience has a lasting effect.

Friends for life! – see photos in [Reunion 21 May 2005](#).

Most of the content here was compiled between 2002 and 2005 and has been re-launched in this format in 2010.

Contributors

Thank you to all the people who have provided their memories, photos and comments.

The sequence of development in reverse order:

From the reunion 2005: *Angus Willson, Fiona Wood* [Adler], *Jonathan Clamp* and a feast of photos.

Please note: we needed updated email addresses for *Ruth Crocket, Giles Norton* and *Paul Copeland-Watts*.

Renewed contacts in 2005: *Christian Gayfer, Christopher Prince, Jane Macready*.

Renewed contacts in 2004: *Nick Hunt* and *Adrienne Ryder-Cook* emailed. *Gael Whittle* submitted a profile to Friends Reunited. *Louis Mair* directs to news of *Jeremy Barker* then and now (More-music).

Memories abound for *Anna Roberts* ([Food](#), [Clothes](#) and [Boarding 3](#)) August 2003.

The addition of the six-one girls photo from Autumn 1971 must, surely, stimulate more recollections. ([Learning 2](#)) Plus photos by *Fiona Wood* [Adler] of *Helen Kalf* [Robertson] ([Boarding 3](#)), *Jenna Huxley* ([Clothes](#)), *Gael, Pippa, Nick, Kate* and a group ([Words wanted](#)). August 2003.

A renewed contact: *Penny Maier* (Bolton-Gilbert) ([Snippets](#)). July 2003

Contribution from *Louis Mair* ([Snippets](#)) June 2003.

Super new photographs in the [Party photo-gallery](#), [Pastimes 2](#), and [Pastimes photos](#) by *Richard Mongar*. Some of these were scanned from negatives which have never been printed! *Simon Colbeck* and *Angus Willson* met up with *David Stuckey* who is now included in the 'recent' Photo-gallery. Plus more accounts of our challenging times from *Ve Chamberlain* and *Helen Kalf* [Robertson], and a letter home from John Woods in [Boarding 3](#).

The photographs have been optimized to improve the download times. March 2003.

Additions from *Jonathan Richards, Fiona Wood* [Adler], *Tim Watts* (pastimes), *Michele Wilson* [Underwood] (clothes, boarding 3 and learning), more old photos from *Simon Colbeck* and reunion ones from *Angus Willson*. 10 October 2002.

New text from *Fiona Wood* [Adler] (see More boarding). Reunion photographs by *Jo Jones* [Atkins], *Simon Colbeck* and *Angus Willson*. 3 October 2002.

Additions from *Shân Lancaster* [Poynder] and *Geoff Barnard*, who also provided some more photographs. 27 September 2002.

Additions from *Peter Gausson* and *Tim Watts* – and more photos – 19 September 2002.

Additions from *Rich Le Mare* [1975], *Simon Colbeck*, *David Stuckey*, *Michele Wilson* [Underwood]. Photo of *Paul Copeland-Watts*. Some text moved and developed – 12 September 2002.

Additions, including photos, from *Jo Jones* [Atkins], *Simon Colbeck*, *Huw Kruger-Gray* and *Ceri Fell* [Jones] – 6 September 2002. Additions from *Shân Lancaster* [Poynder] and more from *Giles Norton* – 29 August 2002.

Started with *Angus Willson*, *Steve Moody*, *Joy Worrell* and *Giles Norton*.



Angus Willson, er, thanks, Geoff!