

# Quad

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## Michael Pearson, Chair of Governors looks forward to the next ten years at the Endowed Schools

It's a great privilege to chair the board of Governors of the Endowed Schools. There is so much that is right about our schools but keeping them successful means that we can't be complacent. It's not just the economic situation which is changing. Other social and educational developments may affect us. Will our outstanding academic achievements, strong pastoral care and extensive cultural and sporting activities be enough? What more do we need to do?

Prospective parents want their offspring to have the best chance possible of entering the best universities and courses. Our GCSE and A level results are outstanding by any measure. LGS boys gained 113 A\* grades at A level, something bettered by only eight boys' schools in the country. 90% of boys go to universities and courses of their choice, almost all of them at the top-level Russell Group or equivalent. This is a huge credit to the staff involved, so it's critical that we continue to recruit and retain first-class teachers and face the challenge of rewarding them fairly, despite pressure on resources. Plans to alter teachers' pension arrangements are another concern. We also have to watch carefully that our pupils sit the most appropriate examinations. Take A level, for example. As Dr Martin Stephen wrote

recently, '*We must be the only country in the world running four separate exams to test university entrants: A-level, the International Baccalaureate, the Pre-U and Scottish Highers.*' University admissions tutors are also divided. Scientists prefer the early specialisation and depth of A levels, whilst Arts tutors prefer the breadth of the I.B.

Though academic achievement is critical, the school experience we offer is so much deeper, wider and more satisfying. I know parents appreciate this. The Headmaster puts it this way - '*We find that pupils learn a great deal when they do not think they are learning at all, especially when they are enjoying themselves in pursuits they have freely chosen.*' It's preparation for a full life, where drama, music and other arts are valued and encouraged, where there is a sport to suit every taste and clubs to allow enthusiasts of all kinds to get together. We must continue to support and develop this culture. As the Head says, '*Our boys encounter far more than is required for examination success. That's what sets them apart from so many others.*'

The state educational system has a patchy record, yet there are signs of



Michael Pearson

a change in attitude which may have an impact on their performance. Some of the new academies (and their leaders) are impressive. Coupled with continuing pressure on parental incomes, this may affect our pupil numbers. In any event, we can expect parents to continue to be acutely aware of the value for money we provide. So we must operate more efficiently and keep our facilities up to date. We shall soon complete the current phase of re-development of the science facilities at LGS and LHS and I expect we shall be starting on the refurbishment and extension of Denton Boarding House next year. Refurbishment of the sports hall and the Hodson Hall is also needed and there are plans for an artificial hockey pitch on campus. So we have plenty to do to keep up. Interesting times!

Michael Pearson (1953-58)

## Cricketers seek more life and bounce



The diggers at work

The search for more life and bounce has led the school to dig-up and re-lay the hallowed cricket pitch. Analysis of the top layers had revealed too much compaction and too little growth and root penetration.

## Scientists seek body for skeleton



The science block skeleton

The science building has been completely removed leaving only the steel skeleton and the roof. Soon the new Physics building will begin to take shape around it.

## Millward tops

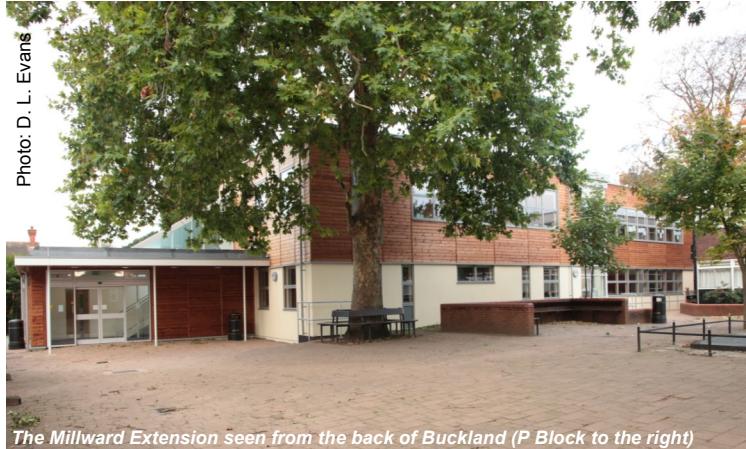
### Murray!!

It was with some trepidation, as well as enthusiasm, that I agreed to your Editor's invitation to write a report on the long-awaited renovation of the Murray Building.

With this renovation, the ground floor has finally gained four good, well-equipped laboratories and proper toilet facilities have also been provided. However the changes that impressed me most were the great improvements to the preparation facilities at the heart of the building. When I arrived in 1970, the Biology Department had two staff and two laboratories in the Science Block: SB2 and SB3. With no adjacent prep room we had to make do with the connecting corridor between the two laboratories, where even the breeding of rats took place.

Today, the Murray Building's preparation facilities are outstanding, with the extra space coming largely from the area previously occupied by M2 (for many years Bill Phillips' laboratory). No longer will the department's excellent technicians have to labour in a room shared with teachers.

When we first moved into the Murray Building there were three staff and three laboratories, maintaining the ideal accommodation ratio that had existed before. I am sure many will remember John Smith in M3 and the attempt to set light to the building with the infamous chlorophyll extraction experiment. To be fair, it was his prompt reactions with the fire extinguisher that saved the day! After John Smith, David Steele took over M3 and then, before long, Jeremy Parton's help was required and our accommodation problems began.



*The Millward Extension seen from the back of Buckland (P Block to the right)*

Fortunately, the then Bursar (Philip Feather) and I were able to find a Portacabin-type laboratory at a failing school and so M4 came into existence. As a stopgap, I naively believed.

However, the increasing number of pupils taking biology has meant that for more than a decade four laboratories were insufficient and today there are nine teachers in the department. As a result, the Murray Building has become two storeys. Upstairs, there are two more quality laboratories with a small preparation area connected by a lift to downstairs. Considering the imaginative use of space on the ground floor, I feel that an opportunity has been missed to make better use of the first floor. In my view, one more laboratory was required together with the addition of a staffroom capable of housing all departmental staff at the same time.

I salute the choice of name for the extension, for it was John Millward we have to thank for promoting the construction of the original building, and I wish everyone a happy and productive stay in the department's refurbished home.

**Geoff Witts (1970-2007)**

## Sixth Form Centre goes Upstairs Downstairs



*Upstairs in the Centre*

The refurbishment of the sixth form centre has provided us with the opportunity to restore much of the south side of the tower to its former glory. At each end of H1 approximately a quarter of the floor has been removed – leaving a mezzanine in the centre – and the false ceiling removed. This has brought back those two great features, which look even more stunning at night with the dramatic use of floodlights. We have also removed any wall we could between the

Throughout the archives the most imposing pictures inside any school building are those of 'Big School'... what was the Hall until the 1960's ... with its magnificent east facing window and wood panelled ceiling. It seems remarkable to think that, after the building of the Hodson Hall, H1 was created by cutting the window

tower and the hall to create a proper entrance with cloakroom and toilets, so providing the sixth form with a centre that is much larger and enabling us to cope better with the 300 boys that now occupy the building at break time.

The most interesting part of the refurbishment was not the knocking down of the walls or the removal of the ceiling: it was the mystery attached to a raised part of the old floor. On every photo of the sixth form centre as it developed through the 60s, 70s and 80s there was a raised seating area, which we discovered was, in fact, reinforced concrete occupying the exact 'footprint' of the boiler room below. Consulting some of the longest serving colleagues didn't produce a satisfactory explanation for its existence. All we know is that it took two men with pneumatic drills a week to remove it! Any ideas from OL's warmly received!



*John Weitzel (1978 - ?)*

*Downstairs in the Centre*

## Where are they now?



**Jim Burns** (1985-2000) is now Assistant Head of Bablake School, Coventry. He still teaches Economics and Business Studies and remains the worst rugby referee in the Midlands. He lives in Husbands Bosworth with his wife Julia, former Head of History at LHS, who is now Headmistress of Leicester High School. Jim would welcome contact from friends on [jgb@bablake.coventry.sch.uk](mailto:jgb@bablake.coventry.sch.uk).



**Cheryl Buchanan née Kelly** (1999-2006) left LGS to take on the role of Head of Biology at the Perse School in Cambridge. The following summer Cheryl married Andrew and became Dr. Buchanan. The couple have a beautiful two year old daughter who already, much to her mother's delight, is developing a fascination with marine biology and eels!



**Jim Crookes** (1988-2005) left LGS to take up the post of Vice-Principal, Pastoral at Welbeck Defence 6th Form College in new premises near Old Woodhouse. Jim now lives at Welbeck with his family, but maintains close links with Loughborough Endowed Schools through his wife, Sue, who teaches at Fairfield, and his children Lucy (18), William (16) and Ben (13), all at LES.



*Spud bashing in the 40's*

## A Wartime Memory

**Peter Simpson** (1944-1948) recalls his days at LGS towards the end of WW2 .

During the latter part of World War 2 the Government decided that thirteen year old school children should be required to relieve the labour shortages of the local farmers by helping with the potato harvest. This task was quickly named 'spud bashing' by we schoolboys.

During the first days of October we would arrive at school clad in old clothes and Wellington boots, carrying a packed lunch, probably of corned beef or jam sandwiches washed down with Tizer or Vimto. We boarded several buses, owned by Lester Bros., Housdens, Browns etc., which were lined up in the Burton Walks. The weather always seemed to be seasonably chilly and misty with damp leaves on the ground.

The farms involved were usually located in the Charnwood Forest area, although occasionally we were sent as far afield as Six Hills. By the time we arrived at the farm the sun had broken through the mists to give a warm sunny autumnal day. We were separated into pairs and allocated a strip of land twenty yards long, marked out by wooden pegs. The tractor and spinner moved slowly round the field to unearth the potatoes, which we gathered and put into the sacks provided on each plot.

It was not long before two schoolboy pranks were devised. The first was to move your peg surreptitiously to shorten your plot and increase that of your neighbour, and the second was to throw (yak) potatoes at other boys, which would often lead to outbreaks of minor warfare. These undesirable practices seemed to persist in spite of the dire threats of those in charge of the operation.

There were moments of bliss during the day. The half-hour lunch break was a welcome relief from our labours, and also much enjoyed was when the spinner became clogged and the tractor was halted, and work ceased for a short while.

We were paid sixpence (2.5p) an hour, and we received at the end of the week what was our first pay packet. We returned to school at about 4.00 p.m., mud caked and tired to crawl thankfully back to home comforts and a hearty meal. We slept like logs to wake the next morning stiff and aching from our experience of hard labour. Perhaps one of the beneficial effects of 'spud bashing' may have been to persuade some of us to pay more attention to our studies to avoid the prospect of a life of manual labour.

## We'll meet again The class of 1944 get together



*Dave Bowman, Lew Price, Mike Allen, Geoff Towers, Ken Blood, Bill Thwaites*

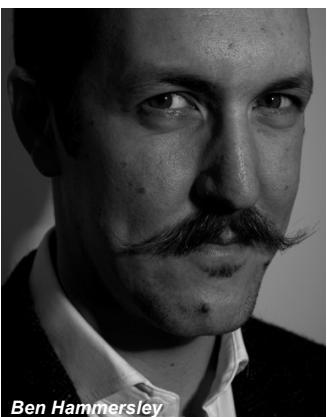
## In the News



Part of Mike Nelson's Installation

Photo: Cristiano courtesy British Council

**Mike Nelson's** (1979-86) installation at the Venice Biennale aroused much admiring comment this year. Rob Sharp, The Independent's art correspondent, described Mike's work as "Britain's most ambitious entry ever to the Biennale, ... talked up as serious contender for the Golden Lion award, given to the Biennale's best national pavilion. Critics have been wowed by the artist's ambition and sense of scale."



Ben Hammersley

**Ben Hammersley** (1987-94) is one of 12 "emerging leaders from the US and Europe" to have been elected to a United Nations Fellowship to visit Morocco, Egypt and Qatar in the autumn of 2011. They will engage in in-depth discussions with decision makers, media leaders, local communities and religious groups.

**Anish Patel** (2000-08), is now taking a gap year from his studies at Loughborough University and working at Leicestershire's Grace Road. He has earned much praise in the local press, topping the season's batting averages for the Loughborough Town 1st XI, scoring 814 runs at an average of 45.22. The Leicestershire 2nd XI remains Anish's next ambition.



Photo: courtesy Loughborough Echo

## New Vice-Presidents for the Association

At the last two AGMs the Association elected three new Vice-Presidents. These are honorary positions given in recognition of service provided to the Association or the school.

Last year we elected **Don Wood**, known by all as the long-serving Honorary Secretary of the Association, who was heavily responsible for reinvigorating the Association in the 1980s and who served it so superbly for over 23 years. Even now he is a regular attendee of the committee meetings where his contributions are always valuable. This year he was joined by Neville Ireland and Tony Scottorn.

## Future events

For more details please visit [www.olaoga.co.uk](http://www.olaoga.co.uk)  
email [honsecola@lesgrammar.org](mailto:honsecola@lesgrammar.org) or [events@lesbursary.co.uk](mailto:events@lesbursary.co.uk)  
or contact Eloise on 01509 638920

### November 2011

Thur 24 Evening Drinks & Light Buffet - Leeds.  
Tickets £12.50 (£7.50 student)  
6.30pm-8.30pm. OLs, OGs, former staff and parents all welcome.

### February 2012

Sat 25 Oxbridge Dinner, St Hugh's College, Oxford, 7pm.  
Open to alumni of LHS & LGS who are current undergraduates or graduates of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and those OLs and OGs living in the area.

### March

Sat 3 Evening Drinks & Light Buffet – Café Rouge, Durham. Tickets £12.50 (£7.50 student)  
6.30pm-8.30pm. OLs, OGs, former staff and parents all welcome.

Sat 24 **The OLA and OGA Loughborough Dinner**  
Burton Hall, 7.15pm for 8.00pm Black Tie.

Our guest speaker will be journalist and broadcaster Charlotte Smith, presenter of BBC One's Country File for 10 years. A former student of both Fairfield and the High School, Charlotte was Head Girl at the High School in 1983.

### April

Fri 27 OLA & OGA Lunch, Hotel du Vin, Tunbridge Wells.  
Tickets £15, from 12.45pm. OLs, OGs, former staff and parents all welcome.

### May

Thur 17 City Networking Breakfast, Brewin Dolphin Offices, 8.30am

Thur 17 Evening Drinks & Light Buffet, London Rowing Club, Putney. Tickets £12.50 (£7.50 student)  
6.30pm-8.30pm. OLs, OGs, former staff and parents all welcome.