



THE BHS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION UK/EUROPE

Autumn Issue

Labor Omnia Vincit



October 2007



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear BHS Alumni & Friends,

Welcome to our Autumn 2007 newsletter. As the UK celebrates Halloween and then Guy Fawkes, Guyana is preparing for Diwali, the Festival of Lights. My local supermarket here in London has half an aisle dedicated to Diwali next to the Christmas section, complete with Diwali cards – a tribute to London's diversity... And we can all look forward to two weeks of evening entertainment by the whizz-bang of fire works to celebrate all three.

The observant amongst you will have noticed that we didn't prepare our usual summer newsletter, so we have a lot to catch up on in this edition.

Thank you for your wonderful support of our events so far this year. Our annual luncheon at Bunga Raya in April was attended by over 70 members and friends and a great time was had by all. We also had a very good turnout for our July day trip to Chester, a fascinating city steeped in Roman history that I had never visited before. This was despite not being able to get to our Central London pick-up point because all road access to it had been closed. Our sincere apologies to everyone who missed the trip because of this. Then our joint Carnival Fete with QC was a huge success. I think this is the first time in Association history that we managed to sell more tickets than QC!

Our next event is the Christmas shopping trip to Boulogne on 24 November, the week after our AGM on 16 November. If you would like to come along please contact a member of the Exec Committee to see if there are any places left. Then there is this year's Carol Service at the usual place. Hope to see you at some if not all of the remaining events this year.

With warm wishes


Alison Tyndall
Chairperson 2006-2008

And – watch out for an exciting new development in the way we communicate with our members. Yes - UK/Europe is building its own website – coming soon on www.bhsukeurope.com.

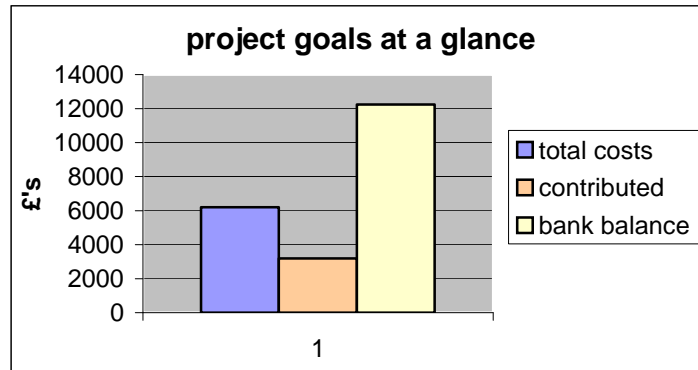
The 2006/08 Executive Committee

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2007 DIARY DATES

<p>Executive meetings have been included to give members a chance to have any points they wished raised brought to the attention of the Executive through the Secretary on 020 8220 3976</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Annual General Meeting</u> Friday 16th November Guyana High Commission Bayswater Road, W2</p>	<p><u>Events</u></p> <p><u>Christmas Shopping in France</u> Boulogne Saturday 24th November</p> <p><u>Carol Service</u> Wesley Chapel Sunday 9th December</p> 
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FUNDRAISING PROJECTS



Update on Student Records Information System (SRIS) from Lance Hinds, Project Coordinator We have already sent G\$1.2 million

“To date three (3) computers and one (1) file server have been acquired as part of the implementation of this project. The server has been placed in the computer room for general protection and because the room is air-conditioned. The others have been placed in the Headmistress’s and administration offices. All three machines are connected via a small Local Area Network (LAN). The one in the Headmistress is not operational presently of a combination of a lack of space and furniture. We are working now on the re-organization of the space and possibly some additional furniture so as to address this issue.

Computer in Admin Office



The focus since the beginning of this year has been on the data entry of the backlog student data into the SRIS. This is a tedious, time consuming task. We are using the student information booklets designed by the Ministry of Education as our source document. The information we are entering includes the following:

Bio-Data – This is primarily contact information for the students and their parents, place of birth, parents’ occupation, no of siblings etc.

Grades - The objective is to maintain computerized grades for all students during their academic terms at Bishops’ High School.

Awards - Computerized records of all prizes, trophies and other awards given to students.

Conduct - The objective is to maintain information on the general and /or specific conduct of students during the time spent at the school.

Health - This is for computerized maintenance of health information, which is crucial in case of emergencies and other similar circumstances. As part of this exercise we are currently entering information for the new students coming into the first form. When that exercise is completed we will continue to enter data for existing students with a goal to begin generating computerized school reports at the end of the September term. This is some additional electrical wiring that is required in the Headmistress's office. This is an issue that we hope to address during this month.

I wish to assure the London Chapter however that the small group working on this project is fully committed to the full implementation of the system despite the challenges and will continue to make sure that use of the SRIS is sustainable over the long term."

Science Labs, latest update from Terry Stuart

We have sent G\$180,000.00.

The Biology lab still awaits the installation of the Teacher's table, gas lines and grillwork. There is a need for stand fans since the windows no longer open. The Chemistry and Physics labs would need to be worked on in the same manner. The estimated cost will be US \$10,000

We have more than sufficient funds to complete these projects and are waiting further instructions from BHSOSA for the next contributory instalments.

NEWS SECTION

Reunion 2008

The Ninth International Reunion

August 5 – August 10, 2008

Here again are the rates

Fairmont Rooms

One per room - \$222 each per night

Two per room - \$122 each per night

Three per room - \$90 each per night

Children under 18 free with parent

To book your rooms follow this link

http://www.fairmont.com/EN_FA/Reservations/ReservationAvailability?hc=RYH&pc=GRBIS1

See you in Toronto where it will be great in 2008!

Christmas shopping in Boulogne

Don't forget to purchase your coach tickets for the great day out across the channel.

Joint carnival fete

A good time was had by all and our share of the profit made?.... A fantastic £1121!

The Bronze Woman project. An update from Bruce Nobrega

We had a set back due to the death of the sculptor --Ian Walters, he was the sculptor who did the Mandela Statue, now located in Parliament Square. He sculpted the marquette of the Bronze Woman, and had just commenced the work when he was diagnosed with cancer. He could not continue, and recommended a young sculptress, Eve Shephard, to continue the work.

The committee went along with his recommendation, hoping to have the statue completed and

unveiled in this year the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade. The statue is supposed to represent the experience of all Caribbean women, not only Afro Caribbeans. We thought the statue; in this year would have been a significant benchmark.

The new sculptress then demanded a new contract with more money, which this charitable project did not have, nor could ever afford. She then demanded that the statue should be changed to accommodate her artistic input. The committee did not like the vision she had of the statue, nor did we agree to the concept of the change. She also demanded that she should have joint copyright, with the main say in any future uses or sales of paraphernalia connected with the statue. With her demands and subsequent delays due to lawyers studying the consequences of these changes, we thus lost the opportunity to unveil the statue this year.

A new sculptor has now been found and can deliver the statue within budget by April 2008, for the unveiling. Cecile Nobrega, the innovator and President of the Project, and all the committee have endorsed this decision.

The statue is to be located in the little park in Stockwell, opposite the station. Under this park are bomb shelters, which housed the returning West Indian 2nd world war soldiers, who were the embryo of the subsequent wave of Caribbean immigrants to the U.K.

A successful Walkathon –narrative from Terry Stuart BHSOSA

We left school just around 5.45a.m. complete with police escort, Red Cross personnel (fortunately not needed), food, water and pick-up vehicles. As we should have expected, there were the **GOOD**, the **NOT SO GOOD**, and the **HAPPY BUT SLOWER** which gave our police escort nuff headaches as he couldn't keep us all together. However we had no mishaps and we were grateful for his protection. We arrived at the stadium around 7.10 (THE SLOWEST GROUP) where after having our snacks, we were able to have a brief tour of the stadium.

Photos taken on Sunday, 7th October after a Walkathon from BHS to the new Stadium at Providence (or might be New Providence). The bottom photo shows a Staff Rep, the Head Mistress Mrs Walcott and the current head of BHSOSA Andrea Owen.



WELFARE SECTION

Our Condolences go out in the UK to:

May 2007 Gloria Beaubrun, on the death of her husband, Norman

June 2007 Maureen Barrow, on the death of her aunt

July 2007 The family of Kamla Haricharran-Bagney who died of cancer
Bridget Richmond, on the loss of her husband.

Our Condolences go out internationally to:

May 2007 Janice Jackson (Guyana), on the loss of her sister, Leila Anderson

July 2007 The family of Yvonne (Cooper) Holder, who died of a heart attack in Paramaribo. Yvonne was the cousin of Dr Joy Leitch and sister of Terry Cooper.

Joy O'Jon (Guyana) and Gertrude (O'Jon) Sampson, on the loss of their brother

Get Well Wishes

Get well wishes go out to our colleague **Adele Williams-Sewell** who is at present undergoing treatment which will last until the end of the year. Adele is a serving member of our current executive. We wish her well and look forward to her joining us 'round the table' again.

Congratulations!

Barbara Sinclair on the birth of her two grandchildren

Welfare activities

Christmas vouchers will be issued again this year to those who qualify.

Welfare sub committee

If you have a problem and you wish to discuss your circumstances in strictest confidence please contact a member of the welfare sub-committee as they are always on hand to give support to members in need. Here is an extract from the terms of reference.

The Welfare Sub-Committee aims to provide individual alumni with a caring, confidential and sympathetic environment in which advice or assistance can be sought to alleviate a personal hardship. In this context "hardship" is defined, as a severe emotional, physical, financial or other more general need which causes the individual distress

Members can contact Barbara (Brown) Sinclair (01223 563576), Claire (Mongul) Carballo (020 8883 2157), Leila (Persaud) Ghartey (020 8769 2635), Dr Joy Leitch (020 8555 6842)

LITERARY SECTION

BROKEN PIECES OF A LOST LIFE

This is the review of an article in the Sunday Times Colour Supplement of 2nd Sept 2007

The story is of a 41 year old man whose body lay undiscovered for two months and there was nothing in his home to identify him.

He is one of thousands of people who die alone and unmourned in the United Kingdom every year.

For some people the decision to disappear is gradual. It begins with a desire to disconnect. It could mean turning the phone off and retreating under the duvet. For most people it is a fleeting escape.

Family and friends keep you tethered. What happens to those who become untethered? Or let go on purpose?

Days, weeks, months, years can pass with people 'slipping through the cracks'.

It ought to be hard to disappear from view. The UK has 4.2million CCTV cameras – approximately 1 camera for every 14 people. If you live in London you are captured an average of 300 times a day. Everyday activities

leave a trail – mobile phones, bank, internet and credit card transactions, car satellite navigation systems, electronic travel passes like Oyster Cards, store loyalty cards and medical records can all be used to trace someone's whereabouts.

Yet there are 218,000 people reported missing in the United Kingdom every year. Two thirds of these are under 18. The majority are found and returned home safely within two weeks. There are at present 150 unidentified cases being reviewed.

In Victorian and Edwardian Britain the death of a pauper carried a tremendous stigma. Today we are less judgmental but keep an emotional distance from those who die alone. Perhaps because the choice to disconnect was theirs so the burden of responsibility on the living is lifted. Or because at a time when there is an increasing number of us living alone, we fear this is what may become of us.

The moral of this story as I see it is '**Relationships are the infrastructure of our lives but they require maintenance or they will crumble**'.

Leila Ghartey

UPDATES taken from BHSOSA website

A TRIBUTE TO LOIS YVONNE HOLDER FROM BHOSA (THE BISHOPS' HIGH SCHOOL OLD STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION)

July 20 2007

Because she attended "The Bishops' High School" she was a member of BHOSA. Apart from periods of time when Yvonne was out of Guyana pursuing her career, she was an actively contributing member of this association.

She will be remembered by all of us for her commitment, her service, her generosity, her sound ideas, her organizing skills, her sense of humour, her "we can do it attitude" her ardent devotion to a cause.... That cause in this case being her alma mater and its products.

The school was very dear to her heart so she readily agreed to stand for election for the post of President in 1998. At the end of the triennium, she was invited to remain for the Reunion Year 2002. (Every three years, the Association has an international reunion in the country of the host chapter.

2002 was to be a significant year for Guyana as the host chapter. The reunion was held in Guyana under the theme "Salute the ties that bind".

It was a tremendous success, especially when we recall what the Guyana environment was at that time. Yvonne threw her all into this activity as Convenor of the Public Relations sub committee, and with the active support of Jennifer Dewar as the convenor of the Reunion Committee we could only win. Scores of Alumni attended from our chapters in the U.K. /Europe, Toronto, N.Y. tri-state Chapter, Washington, California Barbados and Trinidad.

Yvonne herself wrote in her report at the end of this activity "*the welcome banners have been taken down, the nerve medicines dispensed with, fingernails have been sprouting new growth; our overseas visitors have returned home safely. What we still have, are the lingering memories of have been tak en down, the nerve medicines dispensed with, fingernails have been sprouting new growth, our overseas visitors have returned home safely. What we still have, are the lingering memories of a great Reunion and the certainty that the ties of friendship will always bind BHS alumni, no matter what part of the world we find ourselves*".

She remained anxious to get on with the recommendations that came out of the Reunion and the action plans that resulted after collaboration with the school's headmistress.

Yvonne we loved you. We will always remember the passion with which you supported;

- The ground maintenance project of the class of '73 and piloted by Donna Ramsammy-James
- The programme for Senior Alumni .the Christmas basket project actively supported by Terry Stuart and Patricia Gordon
- Magda Pollard's annual CARICOM project...(not only your passion, but also your very generous contributions especially to the CARICOM project.
- Your adoption of the project "Operation Contact" a counseling project with the Lower Sixth Form, spearheaded by Janice Jackson, Vidya Kissoon and Magda Pollard.

- The current Mentoring Project for students in the third form and more recently with the first forms (another of the brain-children of Janice Jackson). A project that is now operated jointly with Tutorial High School.
- The IT project, which the Toronto chapter has had with the school for many years now. Your active support of the donation of computers by Toronto and Susie Savory's annual visit to the computer lab for some Teaching sessions and general discussion, assisted by the ever active, ever efficient Terry Stuart.
- Your smiles and joy whenever you heard of the many contributions from the N.Y –tri-state Chapter or the California Chapter.

Yvonne was an encourager, a stimulator of no mean order. She was a 'pusher' of no mean order. She was a pusher of a special kind. We were in 1996 trying to assemble a group to form a choir to do an item at the Reunion. Magda was trying with her voice training and exercises, but to little avail. Persons kept indicating that they would discontinue because "they could not sing". When Yvonne heard this, she went to the group and said "Come on. Do not drop out. We must sing. I have been practising in my bathroom and my voice has improved. We must sing. We must have a choir. Let us try. We made one more try. The result was unbelievable. The choir suddenly turned the corner. We made a stellar appearance just because of that little extra push and encouragement from Yvonne. The applause was deafening after we had sung Cecile Nobrega's "Twilight". This set in good stead for our Reunion held here in Guyana, when we sang Josh Groban's "You lift me up", and then the popular "Umbrella Party". We were on the road to stardom. Thanks Yvonne.

Yvonne we will remember your concern for people. We'll remember your concern for the welfare of the students.

It was **Albert Schweitzer** who said: **"There is no higher religion than human service. To work for the common good is the greatest creed"**

You worked for the common good. You have spent your life working for the common good. In every sphere of your life, you worked for the common good.

We'll remember your concern for the younger old student not just becoming members of the association, but attending meetings as well and playing an active role. I include here a comment by a young "old student" speaking on behalf of the group of younger ones. It went like this:

"In 2002 while Mrs. Yvonne Holder was President of the Bishops' High School Old Students' Association, there was an upsurge in the interest of the younger old students in joining this renowned organization. The young ones wanted to host a tribute in honour of former headmistress Maureen Massiah and former senior mistress Mavis Pollard. They went to Mrs Holder with the idea. She gave permission and every assistance that was required. The event was a resounding success and thereafter many of the younger set became more active in the association and even became executive members. Many attended the 2002 reunion. The entire body of past students held Mrs. Holder in great esteem and respect and is encouraged by her dedication to the association and the way she wore the mantle of stewardship with such pride and joy. She was a remarkable woman, a woman who exemplified the true meaning of grace stance, poise, excellence and vigour. She was the epitome of the school's motto "labor omnia vincit" "work conquers everything"
Rest in eternal peace true comrade and true friend"

Bit of education

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500's:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, *don't throw the baby out with the Bath water.*

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying. *It's raining cats and dogs.*

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, *Dirt poor.* The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway. Hence the saying a *thresh hold*

(Getting quite an education, aren't you?)

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, *Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old.*

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could, bring home the bacon. They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and *chew the fat.*

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or *the upper crust.*

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. *Hence the custom of holding a wake.*

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the graveyard shift.) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be, saved by the bell or was considered *a dead ringer.*



Now, whoever said History was boring! ! !

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