



Draxonians Association

News
Spring 2019

School News



Ruth Ainley
Head

It was a real pleasure to meet so many Draxonians at the recent dinner and the healthy attendance despite the date being so close to Christmas attested to the loyalty Read School instils in all who pass through its doors.

It has been a whirlwind of a first term and a half at Read School and we have been busy! Our pupil roll on the ascent, now standing at 187 and with 54 pupils new to the School this year we remain a magnet for talented youngsters in the local area. Charles Reade would indeed have been proud of the pupils who performed so well in our recent productions of Peter Pan (Junior School) and The Sound of Music (Seniors) that some Draxonians were able to attend.

As I outlined in my speech at our Reunion Dinner, I am very ambitious for the school and passionately believe that the future of Read School is very bright. For the past 352 years the school has served the local community (as well as communities further afield) as a place of educational excellence, not only in the attainment of academic qualifications but in developing the all-round personal skills and character that we know are even more critical for success in life after school. All of the Draxonians I spoke to at the dinner confirmed this with many personal stories about how the School had shaped them as a person and prepared them for life.

Any week in school amply illustrates the diversity of Read School life and last week we celebrated the return of 22 pupils and parents from a half term ski trip to the Italian alps while simultaneously starting mock GCSE and A Level examinations, organizing a talent show, a Careers Fair and numerous sports fixtures!

Life at Read School is indeed never dull and I invite you to read our weekly newsletter which is posted on the school website, giving details of pupil activity on all fronts!

This is an exciting time to be involved with Read School as we enter the next chapter in our history and hopefully a new era of success. I shall be working hard, alongside David and Zoe to further invigorate the Draxonians' Association and rejuvenate interest in the school among former pupils and staff.

We plan to give you all many reasons to return over the coming years and please consider yourselves welcome in school at any time. Many Draxonians, young and old continue to think about Read School with affection, nostalgia and a commitment to helping us take the school forward to an exciting new chapter.

Best wishes
Ruth Ainley

Head



▲ Senior School pupils as the Von Trapp family in the Sound of Music



February half term ski trip to Folgarida, Italy ►



Read School 1st team enjoyed an ▲ excellent hockey season

The 2018 Draxonians' Winter Reunion was an enormous success

Bringing the event back to the school was widely welcomed and Ruth Ainley as the new Head of the school in her address set out her vision for the future of the Draxonians which she regards as a valuable asset for the school and planning is underway for several future events at the school when Draxonians will be warmly welcomed.

The photographs in the Newsletter illustrate the large amount of hard work put into organising and making the Reunion such a success and as President I have personally thanked on your behalf those largely involved. In view of their dedication it would be appropriate to record their names. Apart from Ruth herself who provided the leadership, she was supported by her PA Julie Walker, Matron Josie Smith, the new Draxonians' Administrator Ellie Grady, the next President Zoe Bayston and not least by the school Catering Manager Janet Cook and her staff who vindicated the decision to entrust the dinner to the school and our ever generous Chairman Peter Watt who provided the table wines.

Included in this newsletter are details of further planned events this year. It is exciting to witness the resurgence of enthusiasm for the Draxonians' Association and I look forward to several other opportunities to meet up before the next Winter Reunion!

Best wishes,
David Ward

President



Draxonians Association
President - 2001 to date,
David Ward



Peter Watt, Chairman of Governors is presented with a Read School Class of 1966 picture in recognition of his many contributions to the school ▼





Generations
of Draxonians
come together
for the annual
Christmas
reunion in
school



Who Do You Think They Are?

We have formed the **Hales Group**, named after the railway station which closed in 1964. This initiative was started with the aim of supporting and expanding the Draxonians' Association following last year's Reunion Dinner. The objective is to name as many pupils as possible on a panoramic school photograph and 1960 from this period was chosen for Phase I.

We are beta testing the data collection system based on the multi-platform google sheets. Everybody is able to view the data on request but only contributors will be able to edit it.

Some facts from the 1960 project so far:

- 50 pupils arrived and 54 departed
- 298 pupils are on the photograph
- 78% have been named so far
- There are 15 pairs of brothers: the Blythes, Dughers, Grants, Grices, Marshalls, Potters, Prangnells, Pranketts, Queenans, Ramsomes, Stokoes, Stones, Swanns, Wards and Watts.

Two interesting asides; On contacting two school friends Robin Hardisty and Vernon Ramsker, it was discovered that both their fathers attended Read School in the 1920's and photographs of them were found in the Archive. This illustrates a potential useful addition as a Family History resource. How many fathers can show their grandchildren pictures of their great grandfathers in sports kit or school outfits from nearly 100 years ago?

John Freeman
(1958-1964)

The Draxonian

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DECEMBER, 1960

SCHOOL NOTES

The number of boys on the School roll at the commencement of the Winter term was 304, and of them 91 are boarders. This is the highest number of boarders ever, and we are grateful to the Vicar for allowing us to use part of the Vicarage as additional boarding accommodation.

It was with great regret that we said "goodbye" to Mr. L. B. Joyce at the end of the Summer Term. He has left to take up a post of responsibility at the Roman Catholic School of St. Joseph's, Stoke-on-Trent. Mr. Joyce had been with us some six years, and throughout that time had identified himself with all phases of our school life. For the past four years he had been chief editor of the Draxonian, and had been one of the co-producers of the Christmas plays, and we wish him luck in his new post and at the same time express our gratitude for all that he has done for us during his sojourn here.

At the end of the Summer term we welcomed as an additional member of the staff, Mr. Howells, B.A., who joined us from Lampeter College to take principally English to the lower and middle school. A long series of mishaps prevented us from making an appointment to take Mr. Joyce's place until well into this Christmas term.

The Headmaster's secretary, Mrs. F. J. McMillen, resigned at the end of August, and Mrs. A. M. Martin has been appointed to succeed her.

Towards the end of the Summer term the Governors presented the old Methodist Chancel in the village to be used as an additional classroom. This is a substantial building, some 100 feet long and 20 feet wide, and has been converted now into a very adequate Science Lab., hereafter known as the "Shed". This conversion was carried out by Mr. Younger, with the assistance of some of the boys, in the final stages of Summer term. Mr. Younger was congratulated on the excellent job he has made of it. It is principally used for the Zoology and Botany classes.

An unusual situation arose at the Sports Meeting this year, when three boys tied for the Victor Ludorum Cup. Normally this would have meant that the three boys would have held the Cup for similar periods of time throughout the ensuing year, but the situation was solved by two parents, who wish to remain anonymous, presenting to the School two further replica cups, so that all three were equally honoured. Thank you very much!

Two songs, "Call of the Sea" and "Two of a Kind," have been dedicated to the School this year by the Yorkshire composer who passed under the name of John M. Cookridge. The manuscripts and all rights appertaining thereto have been sent to the School in appreciation of work done by the music master, Mr. F. J. Scarfe.

We have had two lectures by Old Boys this year, the first, illustrated with films, was one by Mr. Eric March, on "The Preservation of Wild Life in the Tropics," and was most appreciated. The other was by B. Higgins who, on a visit to the School, was surprised to find himself speaking on "Life in America."

What we were talking about in 1960?

Some brief extracts of school news from the Draxonian in 1960

The following are thanked for their help and time in getting this project off the ground: Brian Bugg, Peter Collison, Peter Dugher, David Grant, Granville Heptonstall, Ian Mackland, David Pritchard, Gerry Taylor, Stephen Ward, Robin Hardisty Terry O'Hara, Ken Houghton and everybody who are collating names at present.

Obituary F.W. (BILL) Ballard OBE (Read School 1949-1955)

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the sad news of the sudden passing of old Draxonian, Bill Ballard whom those who attended the recent Winter Reunion event will remember as a lively dinner companion.

Bill's accomplishments are too many to do justice to in this newsletter and his impressive career spanned periods in Engineering and Sales at David Brown Tractors, British Leyland as well as a positions as Sales & Marketing Director at GEC and a high level consultancy to the construction industry and associated businesses in the Middle East.

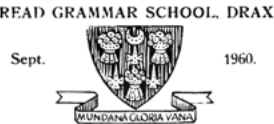
Never one to sit idly in retirement, Bill was also an entertaining after dinner speaker and indeed was in the process of preparing a speech for this year's Commemoration Day at Read School.

Outside work Bill also held a Private Pilot's licence and was interested in both steam railways and DIY. He was Chairman of NHS Patients Group between 2011 and 2018.

Our deepest sympathies are with Bill's wonderful wife Lynda who also attended our recent dinner and whom we very much hope will remain closely associated to Read School on Bill's behalf. A service of thanksgiving for Bill will be held on Friday 15th March and details will be posted on the Draxonians Facebook page.



▼ Class of 1960



Our 2019 Draxonian Calendar of Events

Our 2019 Draxonian Calendar for Read School alumni range from School Open Days to Draxonian-specific networking and social events.

We welcome former pupils of all ages as well as retired staff to all events which are great opportunities to meet fellow alumni of all ages and from varied backgrounds. Please mark your calendars for the following:

Saturday March 9th – 9:30 – 1:00 pm School Open Morning

Includes lunch and recitals from our recent Sound of Music performance

Saturday 30th March 1:00 pm Draxonians Spring Reunion Lunch at Selby Rugby Club.

12:30 pm drinks followed by steak pie & chips lunch & watch match Selby RUFC 2nd XV.

Tickets £10.00 on sale now.

Monday 6th May, 9:30 am – 4:30 pm School Open Day (Bank Holiday)

Open Day for school with a range of fun activities for all ages

Friday 5th July Draxonians Cricket Match and Reunion BBQ

Details to be announced

Saturday 6th July Commemoration Day and Ball

All Draxonians welcome!

We extend a warm welcome to all Draxonians for 'drop in visits' when a cup of tea and a perusal of the old archives is always available! Please come and visit us soon.

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