

Vol. 1, issue 3 –

MAY 2022



ARCHIVIUUM

Blundell's School Archive Newsletter



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 1890

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WELCOME TO THIS MONTH'S EDITION



Ondaatje Building in the sunshine this week

Welcome back to *Archivium*. I have been so delighted with the positive response I have had, yet again, to the last edition – thank you very much for your kind emails.

It has been a busy few weeks following the Easter Holidays in the Archive. Spring has very much arrived with beautiful weather here in Mid Devon. The Archive has a wonderful view across Big Field, so cricket matches have been a bit of a distraction recently when I am trying to appraise and inventory material, but it is a welcome sign that Summer is around the corner. This month's cover photo is another favourite of mine, depicting a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* performed here on Speech Day in 1890. The Blundellian described it as "giving excellent scope for acting" and "first rate".

I hope you enjoy this month's news, and as always you can be in touch using the details at the bottom of the newsletter.

CELF

ARCHIVE NEWS

Enquiries and Uffculme Talk

This month has seen many enquiries from OBs and their families seeking out information about relatives who attended the School. I have also been dealing with enquiries from academics including a professor who is writing a book on the history of dog breeding in this country – and our very own former Headmaster, the Rev. John Russell, makes an appearance, of course, with his famous terriers.



Above: Portrait of John Russell held by the School



Gill Altar created by Blundell's Students in the 1930s

This time of year seems to be a busy one for local history societies. I am in the midst of planning a tour for the Burlescombe History Society in June and recently, I was invited to talk at Uffculme on the School Boy Rebellion of 1787 and the Gill Altar, which was wonderfully returned to the School in 1994 thanks to the tireless efforts of a group of OBs. It was a relief to get my first proper archivist talk out the way, and to meet such a warm and friendly group of fellow history enthusiasts.

Edward Capern Portraits

I have also been trying to clear boxes of unsorted materials in between enquiries. A particularly interesting box donated by the Cockram Family who attended Blundell's in the late 19th century contained about one hundred watercolour portraits of Tivertonians from the late 1840s by the esteemed local poet, Edward Capern (1819-1894). For those of you not familiar with this gentleman, he was a local farmer's son, who worked in a lace factory before he pursued a career as a rural letter carrier in Bideford. His poetry was praised by the likes of Dickens, Landor and Tennyson and he became a bit of a Mid and North Devon celebrity. What is less well known of him, is that he was a talented artist as well and his collection of portraits are safely housed here at Blundell's where I hope to do a bit more research and work on them in the future. Here are just a few for you to enjoy.



Archive Club



Sadly, I have had to say goodbye to the two junior archivists, Elsie and Bella who have re-joined the choir which clashes with our lunch time session. They have been good company and most helpful – and I wish them the best of luck. On the plus side, I have gained a new junior assistant. Toria Curgenvin (Year 12) has a keen interest in pursuing a career in museum studies and as a result, is joining me an hour a week this term for some work experience to build up her CV. She will be helping me put together the OB Exhibition in June and has already been invaluable in helping me shortlist which treasures we plan on sharing with you on the day.



Above and right: a selection of Capern's portraits held by the Archive

Can you help?

Can you help? I have been sorting through some more boxes of papers and have found a nice collection of cricket photos that belonged to the late Ted Crowe. I've spotted Vic Marks in one of them, clearly visiting the School. Does anyone know any more about this event? Or know the names of anyone in the pictures to help me catalogue them? Any information would be most appreciated.



CURIOSITY OF THE MONTH

An interesting collection of menus for OB London Dinners have been catalogued this month. I have had a great time reading them – seeing what was being eaten, where they were held and who were the speakers. I love the fact that stylistically they were done in French, something still commonly done in certain Cambridge Colleges; my favourite of these from my time there being *sauce irlandaise* aka Guinness in a shot glass.

MENU

Paw-Paw Rafrachi
—
Filet de Sole Bonne Femme
—
Caneton Rôti Bigarrade
Petits Pois au Beurre
Pommes Parmentier
—
Ananas au Kirsch
Marron Glacé
—
Café

TOASTS

The Queen
—
In Piam Memoriam
Proposed by - - - The Chairman
—
Floreat Schola Blundellina
Proposed by - The Rev. Canon O. F. Granlund, M.A.
—
Reply
by the Head Master
—
The Chairman
Proposed by - Sir Harold Roper, C.B.E., M.C., M.P.
—
Reply
by the Chairman



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Harry List

A NEW ACQUISITION

A quiet month for acquisitions. Our newest item is the programme for the Awards Ceremony for the British Olympiad & British Astronomy & Astrophysics Olympiad held by the Royal Society back in April 2022. OB, Harry List, was part of the UK Team in 2020 and 2021 – an astounding achievement. He has now gone up to St Catharine's, Cambridge to read Natural Sciences. As always please be in touch with me or the Development Office if you have anything you might like to donate to the Archives.