



Pictorial

News from the Blundell's Foundation

November 2006

Development Plan Launch



On Saturday 23rd September a lunch was held in Big School to launch the new Development Plan. Nearly 130 people attended including donors, Governors, key teaching staff, this year's school monitors and local dignitaries. Guests enjoyed a splendid meal, an address from David Fursdon, the Chairman of Governors, plus a wide-ranging statement from the Head Master outlining his plans for the future of Blundell's. This launch doubled up as the first event of the 1604 society, the new Blundell's Legacy Club.

Detailed plans of the phased developments were available and four colour pull-up stands showed each development and the ethos behind the plan. Brochures describing the Development Plan were distributed. These brochures will act as a supplement to the school prospectus until the plan is



Above: The Head Master addresses guests

complete. The following week they were distributed to all on the Foundation database.

Progress information on the building programme will be available on the

Foundation website under the projects section. We hope to complete the Music School extension and the Academic Centre by September 2007.

“This year is going to be very significant in the development of the School...”

Right: The Head Master speaking at the launch



From the Head Master

This year is going to be very significant in the development of Blundell's School. The School is full and confident after the strong examination results at both GCSE and A Level. The latter as I write are approaching 72% AB grades! As many of you will be aware, the next stage of the School's development has been launched; much of this would not have been possible without the generous benefaction of many Old Blundellians, parents and friends of the School, and on behalf of the staff, the pupils and others closely connected to the Blundell's community I thank all of you who have helped make these imaginative plans a reality. I would, if I may, like to draw your attention to a new idea. A special and unique feature here at Blundell's is the awarding of Foundation Scholarships. These draw

on the wishes of Peter Blundell and are made on a means-tested basis, to those living in close proximity to the School. We have been some way ahead of the debate raised by the Charities Commissioners in recent months; there has for some time been a facility here to help those who otherwise would not have been able to experience the broad education on offer. It would be wonderful if this scheme could be extended to even more pupils. I am hopeful that I can persuade some generous OBs to help me set up a fund to invest an amount of money to endow more Foundationers. The reason is simply that it is a good thing to do. The School is, and has been, immensely richer because of the contribution of the Foundationer award holders.

Ian Davenport, Head Master
October 2006

South Hams Reception

A drinks party was held at the Thurlestone Hotel on the 16th June 2006 for Old Blundellians, parents and friends of Blundell's in the area. Our thanks go to the Grose family who helped with the arrangements and organised the weather so that we were able to enjoy drinks and canapés on the pool terrace.

Martyn Grose, President of the Old Blundellian Club and ex-Governor, introduced the Head Master, who gave a brief address outlining Blundell's future plans. It is hoped to hold another event of this sort in South Devon next year.



Above: Old Blundellians, parents and friends at the Thurlestone Hotel

Blundell's Preparatory School

Governors decided over the course of last year that St Aubyn's should be remodelled and rebranded as Blundell's Preparatory School. St Aubyn's pupils moved in 1999 from the Howden Court site to new buildings and a completely redesigned structure which many of you will remember as the Sanatorium. At the time, finance dictated that some temporary buildings were brought over to accommodate the Pre-Prep. During the summer the temporary buildings were removed and the

Pre-Prep relocated into state-of-the-art classrooms with interactive white boards. At the beginning of the autumn term the Mayor of Tiverton formally opened the new classrooms and the School's name was changed to Blundell's Preparatory School. Nick Folland, the Head Master, now has nearly 300 pupils under his care and will happily show people round the School, as well as explaining to those of you accustomed to blackboards and chalk exactly what an interactive whiteboard does! The new Blundell's Preparatory



Above: Nick Folland amusing the Mayor

School playing fields at Pool Anthony are now in use. Two are currently being used for rugby and the other two will be ready in 2007.



Above and below: Guests at the Prep School opening

Left: One of the new classrooms



Director's Letter

This has been an interesting year for Blundell's, culminating in the launch of the Development Plan. Details of buildings and the launch are recorded elsewhere, but needless to say a huge amount of research, including space and academic audits, Governors' Think Tank, staff and pupil consultation, has resulted in a plan to provide pupils and staff with the tools they need to fulfil potential.

The academic results this year were again excellent, with very promising GCSE performances and 70% of A Levels passed at A or B grades. This is Blundell's' second best ever set of results. It is remarkable that not a single A Level was failed – the first time I can recall this happening in my 40 years here. Cynics amongst you will say A Levels have been dumbed down; there may be an element of truth in that, but for all A Level candidates to pass requires excellent judgement on the part of

pupils and staff in subject selection and motivation over the two sixth form years.

I am regularly asked by Old Blundellians why Blundell's is not higher in the league tables. The statistics are grossly misleading and do not compare like for like. If the highly selective day schools are taken out of the list and co-educational schools with limited

“It is remarkable that not a single A Level was failed...”



Above: Meeting OBs in Hong Kong



Above: Meeting possible Blundell's parents in Hong Kong



Above: Paddy taking part in OB Day tennis

selection are looked at, Blundell's does very well. I am familiar with the entrance examinations for many of the top academic schools and I

must question why any pupil at these schools fails to get at least A/B grade in any subject. I am sure that had they chosen to join Blundell's they would have done as well, if not better.

Blundell's continues to punch well above its weight in many areas including the arts and sport. But I have no doubt that the biggest improvement over the last dozen years has been in academic performance. The focus of the School, and this is very clear from pupils' opinions, has switched to the achievement of academic success. This is the message which is being broadcast by the Governors and Ian Davenport to feeder schools, pupils and parents.

Thank you to those who have contributed to the 2004 campaign.

You will now see exactly how your money is to be spent and I encourage you to return to Blundell's as the new Development Plan progresses. As a school without significant endowment, Blundell's is always in need of donations to support fee income for the capital projects which are so important to keep it in the forefront of UK boarding education.

I have enjoyed meeting Old Blundellians this last year at social events and shows. I shall be in South Africa in January and hope to enjoy another Johannesburg dinner. If you would like to visit Blundell's, please contact Patricia at the Foundation office. We are always happy to take you round Blundell's.

Paddy Armstrong

Shows

Blundell's again attended the Royal Cornwall show in Wadebridge in June and supported a joint breakfast with the CLA to which Cornish parents and Old Blundellians were invited. The Head Master made a flying visit and Peter Klinkenberg and I were pleased to see a large number of Old Blundellians in the School tent.

We were also present, as usual, at the Devon County Show in May and at the Mid Devon Show in Tiverton in July. Many Old Blundellians and parents visit and there is always a drink and a comfortable sofa. We shall be at all three shows again next year and will be holding an event of some sort during the Cornwall Show. Dates of the shows, directions and details of the Blundell's stand will be posted on the Foundation website early next year.



Above: Royal Cornwall Show 2006



Above: Ian Davenport at the Mid Devon Show



Events at Blundell's 2006



Above: Chairman of Governors, David Fursdon, with the Head Master at the Development Plan Launch



Above: Germany – drinks before dinner



Above: Speech Day



Above: Blundell's Fete 2006



Below: OBs in Hong Kong



Above: Pre-Prep Classroom



Above: Leavers' Ball



Above: OB Day



Below: OB Day Magpies

Left: Leavers' Ball

Below: Open Day 2006



Germany Dinner 2006

Forty Old Blundellians, parents and the home team gathered again at the Anglo German Club in Hamburg. The weather was excellent and we were able to enjoy drinks on the upstairs balcony before sitting down to a large buffet.

Right: Drinks before Dinner



**Below and middle:
Germany Dinner 2006**



Ian Davenport brought the gathering up to date with news of Blundell's. Support for this event is good and we hope to hold another German dinner in 2007. The Blundell's German leavers met for a final supper at the Armstrongs' home in Tiverton in June and exchanged contact details. Hopefully we will see some of them in Hamburg next year.

Mr and Mrs Klinkenberg have organised a girls' hockey tour to Hamburg next year. Details will be published on the Foundation website for all who wish to support this event.

Below: German Leavers 2006



Never Mind



Above: Eldred Williams

Both Gwynne and I have terrible gout and she's a teetotaller, so I might as well drink on. The other good thing about gout is that you can be sure the excruciating pain will still be there tomorrow, whereas with heart irregularities, which I also have, you can't be sure they, or you, will be there tomorrow.

I have therefore urged my publishers on, to try and ensure that my book gets its dust jacket before I get mine!

As a G.P. in New Zealand for 39 years I became famous, or notorious, for the letters I wrote to the hospital when referring my patients, to the extent that I was invited to contribute a column to a monthly medical journal. I complied for about four years, and wrote a few more after I retired. Mostly humorous/facetious, some poignant, all but one founded on fact, with but a little embroidery, naturally a strong medical and Kiwi flavour permeates most but not every one. These anecdotes are now being combined in a slim volume entitled 'Never Mind', published by Melrose Books of Ely, Cambridgeshire.

The Commissioning Editor of Melrose has been kind enough to comment 'The language and tone range from the cynical to the self-effacing, with never a dull or slow moment. The wit is intelligent and often biting, yet equally at times compassionate, understanding and moving. This is a wonderful collection of tales and anecdotes,

spanning the spectrum in terms of human tragedy and comedy, a fitting testament to life and the profession that works to preserve it. Accompanied by hilarious cartoons, this is a fine work, life affirming and intelligently humorous.'

'Never Mind' is not a biography as such, although it covers boyhood frustrations at not visiting Dawlish Warren because World War II broke out, a piano débâcle under the aegis of the late and formidable Jimmy (Jazz) Hall, instructive if humiliating experiences as a medical student in London, and equally instructive and humiliating experiences as, amongst other roles, Hospital Casualty Officer, Surgeon Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, a tourist in Mexico and Tunisia, a tourist and ex-pat in my own England, and, as the introduction and conclusion to 'Never Mind' relate, enlightening and mortifying experiences as to how to bow in and how to bow out.

The late 'Boomer' Brooke Smith and 'Neddie' Clayton taught me my English. Thank you, Sirs.

Eldred Williams

Brief reflections from a leaver

After having spent seven years at Blundell's, it was a harsh reality knowing that I'd come to the end of my school career. Although I looked forward to the excitement of my gap year to Sri Lanka for three months (as a volunteer teacher) and then on to New Zealand, Hawaii and Toronto, the reality of not being in Blundell's anymore was a strange one to come to terms with!

Having lived on the Blundell's campus all my life, not only has

Blundell's been a brilliant school but a fantastic home – I couldn't have got more out of it. With music being my strongest interest, I was able to do all that I could in my seven years with the greatest involvement I could achieve. I also felt that I overcame many academic difficulties with the staff at the School who seemed more than happy to be there at the drop of a hat to help.

My last year at Blundell's in Upper 6th was amazing to say the least.

...continued overleaf

Below:
Annabel Barlow



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Before I moved into Westlake I thought it would be good fun, but it couldn't have been better! Our year became a very close community, the running of the house gave us freedom (but obviously not too much!) and the work ethos seemed to become stronger as we all supported one another towards the exams. It was great to be surrounded by encouragement. There were many highlights in Westlake for me; the ducklings that arrived in the summer, the paddling pool and of course our end of year celebrations to just name a few, but I cannot miss out this year's house music! The participation of the house was huge, with great enthusiasm which led us to win! Everyone worked together choosing various ideas for the concert, and we managed to end with a grand finale of 'Ghostbusters!' There was great support from the house and likewise through the year with various sport, music and dramatic events, the support stayed present within our year in Westlake.

I became very attached to Blundell's and now I've left I don't feel quite like I belong anywhere! No routine is very bizarre and living on the campus but not really being part of it any more has been very odd. I look forward to coming back, meeting up with school friends and travelling before university, but I will miss it terribly. However, not only is it being away from the routine but the friends and people who will have undoubtedly influenced my life. In Yeats' words often quoted by the Head Master, "Think where man's glory most begins and ends, and say my glory was I had such friends."

Annabel Barlow
(GH and W 1999-2006)

A Novelist's View of Blundell's

'Father' of English best-selling novels recalls his school days

Since leaving Old House in 1951, I have spent more time writing novels than doing anything else. Even in L5D my ambition was to become a novelist and I am indebted to my English master, 'Boomer' Brooke-Smith, for encouraging me. It was during on OH Discussion Group that Boomer settled matters. He had been asked to read a Paper on Korea but for some reason he gave one on Careers instead. Not that it mattered. The two subjects conveniently overlapped. Boomer stressed that to be a novelist I needed something sensational to write about, so he suggested that I should volunteer for the Korean War during my National Service.

It was tongue-in-cheek advice, but I took him seriously. I wasn't even put off when he added: "If you survive, you'll have material for a best-seller, and if you don't survive you'll know you were never meant to be a novelist anyhow. A win-win situation!"

As it happened, things turned out well and now, over 50 years later, I am still churning out novels. My latest is 'What a Fag!'. It is Volume II of 'Memory and Imagination', my fictionalised memoirs. It is about life at Blundell's and the most enjoyable book I have ever written. Blundell's then was a far cry from the school of today, and it is pointless to make comparisons. I can only say that the old style Blundell's suited me down to the ground. I can't imagine a more enjoyable and productive five years. Blundell's not only took me from being an outright dunce to a respectable A Level achiever, but it taught me how to enjoy myself and make use of every available moment. The value of sportsmanship and team spirit, as taught by the likes of Ronnie Seldon and Jonah, has stuck with me ever since; and Old Blundellian sport, under the leadership of Ted Crowe, has given me years of enjoyment.



Above: John Hollands

Indeed, easily the greatest gift of Blundell's has been enduring friendships.

Inevitably, the question will arise: "Was Blundell's really as you describe in the book? Well, my contemporaries recognise it immediately, and can relate to all the incidents, so the essence is there; yet I make no apologies for having indulged my imagination. An author sees things through artistic eyes, and imposes his own interpretations. My inter-House cricket matches are a good example. Of course they weren't as bizarre as I make out, but that's how they seemed to me. To my brother, 'Beak' Hollands, they were even more outlandish and he is adamant that it was elements from the entire school, not just FH, that tried to instil the spirit of cricket into OH by means of mass fisticuffs.

When writing a book like 'What a Fag!' it is necessary to embroider certain incidents. It gives them impact and continuity, keeps the reader turning the pages. What is vital is to capture the true spirit of the School: to convey that Blundell's was a very fine school indeed and a great place to be educated. The test of the book is whether or not the reader turns the last page in sympathy with that view. Read it and see for yourself.

Signed copies of 'What a Fag!' are available through the Foundation Office. Special price: £7.50 including postage.

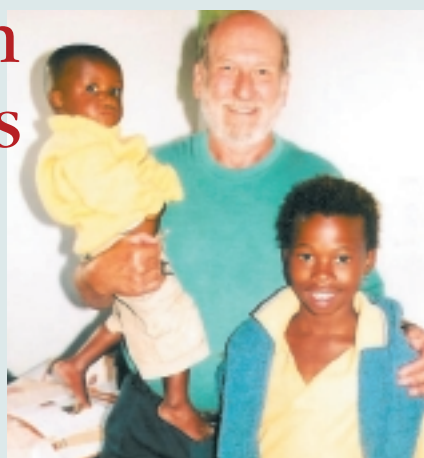
John Hollands



Working with AIDS orphans – 51 years on

I left Blundell's as Head of Old House under Pat MacElwee in 1955 – just over 51 years ago. After National Service, Cambridge, and teaching in schools in Canterbury, Nigeria and London and then the University of Leeds, where I ended as Director of a Post-Graduate Centre for research and teaching, I retired. But retirement took the form of working on a UK-Government funded Project in Limpopo Province of South Africa supporting over 80 schools that had been disadvantaged by the apartheid regime. Now, following my second retirement, I am working voluntarily on a multi-racial project supporting orphans – mostly caused by the HIV/AIDS pandemic sweeping the African continent. The project is called 'Mponegele Ke Itirele' – which in the local Sepedi language means 'Give us light so that we can find our way ourselves.'

We support over 200 children and have set up five "drop-in centres" in rural villages around the Provincial capital of Polokwane (formerly Pietersburg). At these centres we



Above: Colin with a brother and sister – two of four orphans from the same family



Above: Colin's wife Di gives orphans enriched mealie porridge

provide daily food, help with the children's homework, clothes, and basic training in growing vegetables. We hope to set up a major centre where we can offer more specialised training in skills for the older boys and girls, and others in their community.

We have had some support from local companies – banks, supermarkets, bakeries, radio stations, etc. – but battle on a weekly basis for food, water and firewood – not to mention funds to build our proposed centre.

We have a 'Friends' organisation in the UK, which is raising valuable funds for us and has helped renovate a derelict building into our leading drop-in centre.

We work closely with the local government, which not only gives us some food, but also refers malnourished orphans to us. We also work closely with the relevant tribal authorities – indeed one of the local Chiefs has already given us land on which to build our proposed Project Centre.

At 70 years old, this is a far cry from my days at the University of Leeds producing academic papers in international research journals, but it is work that has its own rewards such as the happiness on the faces of the children. And isn't this what Peter Blundell's vision was all about? Helping children whose parents (or in this case, the lack of them) were unable to provide adequately for them.

We are a small project, but this has its advantages. We produce regular Newsletters which inform our supporters of how the project is progressing. We think this is an important part of our work. All too often supporters give funds, but never know how these funds are spent. One of my roles, as Editor of the Newsletter, is to keep our supporters informed as to how the project is developing. Every donor receives regular updates via these Newsletters.

If you want to learn more about this project log on to www.limpopo-orphans.org or e-mail orphans@tntmail.co.za or contact the 'Friends' c/o Dr Sylvia Weir, 16 Crescent Place, Brighton BN2 1AS.



Above: With the Provincial Minister of Education (the Project's Patron) and the Project Chair looking at some of the orphans' work



“Bits and pieces”

General Queries

The Foundation Office operates full-time (9.00 am–5.00 pm) and Patricia is only too happy to help with any queries you might have. Do phone/email/write and we will do our very best to help.

Lyons-Wilson Paintings

The School would like to collect a list of Lyons-Wilson paintings. If you are fortunate enough to have one or more of these, could you please send the following details to the Foundation Office: title; year of painting; size of painting (without frame) in inches. A photograph of the painting would be extremely helpful, with or without the frame.

The Blundellian

At present a relatively small number of Old Blundellians receive this excellent magazine, which is published annually and provides a complete record of the school year. This year's is a particularly good edition with lots of photographs.

Any Old Blundellian who would like a copy should send a cheque for £18 (made out to Blundell's School) to Patricia at the Foundation Office, including their name and address. The magazine will then be mailed to them. Anyone wanting the magazine posted overseas needs to contact Patricia to find out the postage.

Blundell's Online

Please remember to go Online and change your address/email address/telephone number when you move, then we can keep in touch with you. On the school website (www.blundells.org) click on Blundell's Online and follow instructions.

Covenants/Gift Aid

1. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, please let the Foundation Office know.
2. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return.
3. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, do please phone the Foundation Office or refer to help sheet IR65 on the HMRC website: www.hmrc.gov.uk
4. Please notify the Foundation Office if you change your name or address.

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