

Year Group Reunions

The annual Alumnae Reunion Lunch will take place on **Saturday 10 May**.

Rona MacLean will be contacting the **Year of 46** to tell them that she will be hosting a reunion at the Alumnae Reunion lunch on **Saturday 10 May**. **Claudine Tyson** has also written to all in the **Year of 48** to let them know that she is spearheading a reunion.

The **Year of 51** will also meet under the auspices of **Daphne Clayton (Butler)**. A few of them have been meeting regularly at the lunch, but they are looking for a really good turnout this year! **Enid Stockwell** is hosting the **Year of 55** get together.

The **Year of 56** are celebrating a special birthday this year, so **Frances Eggo (May)** and **Maureen Ellis (Perrett)** have arranged a reunion. **Marilyn Sertin (Wright)** is once again hoping that a large number from the **Year of 57** will come; she organised a very respectable turnout last year. **Hilary Devonshire** is also hoping for large numbers from the **Year of 58** to come to the lunch.

Liz Jones (Ramsden) would love to see more from the **Year of 70** – although they too had a very respectable turnout last year.

Last, but not least, the alumnae who left JAGS 20 years ago, the **Year of 88**. **Shadia Syed** is spearheading the reunion for this year, and is coming in from Bangladesh, so will not brook excuses of distance!

Legacies help secure the future of very deserving girls

Leaving a legacy to JAGS in your will is an excellent way of supporting the school. We particularly welcome such gifts not only to assist with the development of our facilities but also to help us increase the number of James Allen's Assisted Places.

At present we are offering up to 19 each year, but we are eager to expand the scheme to enable as many talented girls as possible to benefit from a JAGS education regardless of their parents' ability to pay.

Legators are enrolled as members of the James Allen Society. They wear the pin of the Society and are invited to attend the Society's annual lunch. There are many forms of legacies. Some people leave a cash gift; others leave a bequest of property, stocks, shares or other valuables.

To discuss any aspect of leaving a legacy to James Allen's Girls' School, please contact, in confidence, Myles Rusak - Development Administrator at 020 8299 8417 or email: mrusak@jags.org.uk

Congratulations!



Our warmest congratulations go to Sally Hawkins (Year of 94), who has just won the Silver Bear award as Best Actress at the Berlin Film Festival for her performance in Mike Leigh's latest film, *Happy-Go-Lucky*. Sally plays an irrepressibly cheerful primary school teacher, Poppy, who refuses to put a negative spin on life despite mishap after mishap. Both the film and Sally herself have received rave reviews during the festival.

This is her third collaboration with the director Mike Leigh, following appearances in *All or Nothing* and *Vera Drake*. Sally enjoys the process of improvisation which is central to Leigh's way of working, which she describes as "... scary and exciting at the same time".

The success of Sally's latest film comes after leading roles in the BBC's *Fingersmith* and *Twenty Thousand Streets Under the Sky* (2005) and as Anne Elliot in *Persuasion*, screened by ITV in 2007. She will be seen later this year with Colin Farrell in the new Woody Allen film, *Cassandra's Dream*.

For Your Diary

Choral & Orchestral Concert

Tuesday, 18 March
St. John's, Smith Square - 7.30pm
Programme includes Mussorgsky's *Night on a Bare Mountain* and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*
Tickets from St John's Smith Square Box Office 020 7222 1061 or online at www.sjss.org.uk.

JAGS Community Orchestra

Saturday, 12 April
All Saints', Rosendale Rd, SE21
7.30pm

Old Girls' Golf Day

Thursday, 17 April
Dulwich & Sydenham Hill Golf Club
Gillie Litterick (Finch): 01342 822445
litterickgm@hotmail.com

Chamber Music Concert

Thursday, 8 May
JAGS Holst Hall - 7.00pm

Alumnae Reunion Lunch

Saturday, 10 May
JAGS - 12noon

JAGS Choral Society Concert

Sunday, 22 June
JAGS Holst Hall - 6.00pm

James Allen Society Lunch

Thursday, 5 June
Formal invitations will be sent to members of the Society in April.

Botany Gardens' Open Day

Saturday, 7 June
2.00pm - 5.00pm

Founder's Day

Saturday, 28 June
JAS, FojAGS, Alumnae Happy Hour
3.00 - 4.00 in the Careers Centre!

Founder's Concert

Tuesday, 1 July
St Barnabas - 7.30pm

James Allen's Girls' School
East Dulwich Grove
London SE22 8TE
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To Read and So...

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Class of 61 Reunion - Saturday 17 November 2007



Word about our last two get-togethers in 2003 and 2005 had obviously spread and this time 24 of us from all over the country met up, initially for coffee and afterwards for lunch. The Royal Festival Hall echoed with shrieks of delight as people arrived and as one after another recognised each other (not bad when you consider some had not seen anyone else for 47 years!) and the noise levels rose as tongues started wagging.

We had asked for old school photographs to be brought along and much fun was had comparing past and present-day selves and remembering those unable to be with us. Apologies had been received from Geraldine Stokes-Harrison (Bosher) and Julia Evans (Meynink), who both hope to join us another time. Julia and Sandy Harris (Fini) had also sent emails telling us about their lives, which we found very interesting, and Cindy Rutherford at JAGS had been kind enough to remember the date and wished us well. Sadly, Penelope Washington then had to leave, but the rest of us went on for lunch, just across the road to Chez Gérard. Luckily, they had set aside a large room for us, so we were able to relax, enjoy the food, and catch up on people's lives. The last of us eventually left the restaurant at 4.15pm, vowing to make this an annual event in future.



Do get in touch via JAGS if we have been unable to contact you and if you would like to join us next time; 'we' being: Christine Bertera (Haydon), Jackie Bevan (Maddocks), Isabel Brown (MacKillop), Ann Dunbar (Williams), Jean Dyer (Rogers), Irene Hall (Kelly), Rosemary Hannam (Ellison), Susan Hazlem, Carol Heasman (Stuart), Janet Hetherington (Hall), Sarah Hirom (Wells), Gillian Hollowell (Spiers), Valerie Lawrence (Fairbairns), Sylvia Lawson (Pycok), Helen Oram, Gail Owen (Jelley), Pam Pheasant (Mills), Valerie Powell (Angel), Rosemary Sigee (Deller), Elizabeth Shatford (Smith), Wendy Sparrey (Hall), Trixie Veal (Field) and Tanya Whitty (Gibson).

JAGS Choral Society 20th Birthday Concert



The impressive concert given in St Barnabas' Church on 11 December 2007 celebrated the 20th Birthday of JAGS Choral Society. It was a joyful occasion, and it seemed only fitting, therefore, that the programme contained two contrasting settings of the *Te Deum*, by Bruckner and Dvorak. The intensity of the Bruckner was particularly memorable.

The concert opened with the delightful *Overture to Hansel and Gretel* by Humperdinck, performed by the Symphony Orchestra. The rest of the programme

brought together the school's own choral forces (Holst Chamber Choir, Madrigal Group and the Whole School Choir) with JAGS Choral Society. Puccini's *Humming Chorus (Madame Butterfly)*, and Verdi's *Triumphal March (Aida)* and *Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves (Nabucco)* were given stirring performances in which the commitment and enjoyment of the singers and instrumentalists were evident. Perhaps most moving was the *Hallelujah Chorus*, as the Choral Society's very first concert in 1987 had featured Handel's *Messiah*. All performances were ably partnered by the Symphony Orchestra.

JAGS Choral Society is very much a part of the musical life of JAGS, and the Headmistress, Mrs Marion Gibbs thanked the Choral Society members for their immense contribution over the past 20 years. The evening was a true celebration of the JCS – a challenging and successful programme, and in every sense "a big sing"!

Do you have a story to tell about your time at JAGS? If so please write to us.
James Allen's Girls' School, East Dulwich Grove, London SE22 8TE
or email: cindy.rutherford@jags.org.uk

From the Headmistress



Times have been challenging at JAGS recently. The building work is moving ahead quickly (as you can see from the photographs in this issue) and everyone has had to get used to walking a little bit

further in the open air in order to travel from one place to another. Fortunately the weather has been fairly dry, so the JAGS umbrellas have not often been needed! The good news, too, is that the project is running to time and we should have a wonderful new building ready to move into in the Autumn. We will need time to train our staff in the new kitchen, but hope that it will not be too long before meals in the Holst Hall become a thing of the past. We are also looking forward to the new drama studio, teaching rooms and staff areas, which should gradually transform life at JAGS.

In addition to the building project we have been subject to a full school inspection – a team of 13 inspectors from the Independent

Schools Inspectorate were with us for four days in February. They interviewed over 100 pupils, closely examining the written work of almost all of them, and they held meetings and interviews with staff, parents and community representatives. This was in addition to observing lessons, assemblies, tutorial times and extra-curricular activities. At the time of writing we have not received the final published report, but the initial oral feedback was very positive. It is good for the work of the whole team here at JAGS to be acknowledged in this way; the final report will encompass the activities and achievements of our

“Spending one’s time with JAGS girls can only lead to excitement, fun and laughter along with admiration for their intelligence, ingenuity and altruism.”

pupils and staff in all areas of the school from Reception to the Sixth Form. This will probably be the last such detailed inspection as independent schools are soon to move to the ‘lighter touch’ Ofsted-style inspections with just one or two inspectors in school for one or two days every three years. That

should certainly be a lot less stressful and disruptive than what we have just experienced!

Meanwhile JAGS pupils have continued to meet with success in many different fields. We had a record number of Oxford and Cambridge offers in January – 30 in total. Well done to all the girls concerned and to all those who have good offers to read their chosen subject at other universities. Congratulations, too, to our under-16 Indoor Hockey team who came second in the South East Regional Finals and went on to play in the National Finals in Worcester at the end of January, finishing in 9th place overall. Well done to the Intermediate Swimming Relay Team who competed in the National Finals once again this Spring!

Being Headmistress of JAGS remains most enjoyable and stimulating – spending one’s time with JAGS girls can only lead to excitement, fun and laughter along with admiration for their intelligence, ingenuity and altruism. Someone commented to me recently that “you can always recognise a JAGS girl!” and they were speaking of our alumnae. Thank you for all your support and I do hope to see many of you during the coming months.

Marion Gibbs

Where are they now?

Does anyone know the whereabouts of **Esther Jones** and **Valerie Claire Clark**? They are from the **Year of 56** which is having a reunion at the 10 May lunch.

Melanie Rose is looking for **Angela Blake** from the **Year of 90**.

Also, the **Year of 34** would like to trace **Evelyn Rothern**.

If you can help, please contact the Development Office on 020 8299 8405

GCSE Art Exhibition

The Pavilion Art Exhibition in Dulwich Park proved to be a great success with visitors commenting on the quality and diversity of the work from the selection of GCSE pieces. Varied in media from dry-point prints and collages, juxtaposed with needlepoint and appliqué textiles, the exhibition was exciting and highly accomplished.

Well done to all the exhibitors!



Selection of works from the exhibition

James Allen’s Benevolent Fund

The James Allen’s Benevolent Fund was set up by the alumnae in 1936, under the guidance of the Headmistress, Miss Belcher. The intention was to establish a capital fund whose interest could be used to make grants to girls who would otherwise not be able to make the most of the opportunities which being at JAGS offered them. Over the years many girls have benefited in a wide range of different ways whilst they have been at JAGS. Times and education have changed but there is still a need for this fund. The grants are awarded through the school and it may be that the only people who know that they have been helped are the Headmistress and the recipient.

“I just wanted to write this letter to say thank you for providing the opportunity for me to go on the school trip abroad during the half-term. I had a great time – it was really fun and I learnt a lot. I really enjoyed going to the local school and meeting young people my own age. I also liked seeing the different architecture and transportation systems. It was a very positive experience and I really appreciate being able to go.”

– Current Pupil

Recent awards have helped:

- Contribute to the cost of sports equipment or travel costs for girls selected to play for county or country
- Subsidising girls who are in the choir or orchestra so they can take part in overseas tours
- Subsidising those on language courses who need to visit or study abroad
- Contributing towards the costs of year 7 Outdoor Activities week so that every girl in the year can attend.

Grants are made at the discretion of the Headmistress who is advised by the teaching staff as to the greatest need. This service which the alumnae give to the school is greatly valued.

JAGS Choral Society

JAGS Choral Society (JCS) is composed of current and ex-parents, staff, friends of the school and people in the local community who enjoy singing. JCS was founded in 1987 to give the girls at JAGS the chance to sing with mature voices in major choral works. Over the past 20 years the Choral Society has grown and developed a musical life of its own, and literally thousands of JAGS girls have benefited from these shared concerts.

Every year JCS gives three public performances, two in Dulwich and one at a Central London venue such as St John’s Smith Square, Blackheath Concert Halls and Cadogan Hall. JCS enjoys performing

a wide-ranging repertoire; previous concerts have featured works such as Bach’s B minor Mass, Verdi’s Requiem, Orff’s Carmina Burana and David Fanshawe’s African Sanctus, as well as new works specially written for the choir.

Like JAGS Community Orchestra (JACO), JAGS Choral Society helps to deepen the relationship between the school and the local community. It rehearses on Tuesday evenings during the school term. New voices are always welcome – previous experience of singing in choirs is not necessary, and there is no audition, just simply a warm welcome from the other members. Membership is open to anyone, irrespective of connections with the school.



If you are interested in joining the JAGS Choral Society, please contact Leigh O’Hara via the JAGS Music Department on 020 8613 6436 or music@jags.org.uk.



Pool Hall 1950s



Pool Hall February 2008

Food & Thought - The development of the new Dining Facility