

Looking Ahead

Our Headmistress, Mrs Emma McKendrick, writes...

'Building up constructive, supportive and positive relations with our alumnae is one of the key aims of the School in the year ahead. As many of you will be aware, Michelle Scott has set up our Foundation Office at the School. A main function of the new Department is to support our alumnae and the DHSA, our formal alumnae association!

Over the past few months we have met with a wide range of our alumnae in a series of focus groups at Downe House and in London. In these meetings we have discussed how the School can better support our alumnae at every stage of their lives, looking at what our old girls might want or need from us. There is no denying that connecting with your fellow alumnae can reap huge rewards socially and professionally. We want to use our School resources to maximise and enhance that connection and those benefits.

We are working closely with the DHSA to evaluate what we and the Seniors Association currently do, what we and you think we can do better, and when and how we can

enhance the alumnae relationship with the School and each other.

Part of the process has involved sharing our ten year vision for the School and gathering feedback on these development plans. We look forward to sharing the outcome of these meetings with all of our alumnae early in 2012.

Hopefully you have already noticed some changes and additions to the

way we communicate with you – there are plenty more new ideas to follow!

If you would like to share your thoughts, please do get in contact with me in the Foundation Office. I would love to speak with you.

Michelle Scott, the Director of the Foundation (scottm@downehouse.net or 01635 204702)



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Mrs Michelle Scott has been a member of staff at Downe House for over fourteen years. Joining

the School in 1997 (the same year as Mrs Emma McKendrick) Michelle was Director of Drama until seconded to the position of Foundation Director in 2010. As a member of the Leadership Team, Michelle is involved in all areas of School life and has developed a true understanding of the ethos of Downe House; its history, founding principles and future aspirations. As a teacher and tutor of hundreds of alumnae over the years, Michelle knows what makes a 'Downe House girl' – former, current and future.

Then and Now...

The Main Dining Room has recently been extended and the girls are enjoying the lovely new conservatory space and the addition of round tables.

The aims were to create more dining space and allow greater natural light, as well as to encourage an enhanced social atmosphere. All have noticed and are benefiting from these changes. The staff and girls mix throughout the dining room and there is a much greater desire to linger, chat and savour the food on offer.

The girls enjoy a wide range of delicious food from the deli counter, the salad and soup bars, and the wonderful selection of freshly cooked hot meals from the servery. The daily menu is published online for the girls and their feedback is welcomed.

House Suppers remain a highlight of the term with themed meals, and fancy dress dinners are popular additions to the School calendar. Pudding Club, European Week and sumptuous special teas this Term have delighted our Downe House diners!

The feel of the dining room remains the same – it is a buzzing hub of the School providing nourishment for busy brains, ladies and imaginations.



Dining Room 1980



Dining Room 1932



Dining Room 2011



Dining Room 2011

A Chat with Pat



Grace Regan (DH 2009) interviews long serving member of staff Patricia Lockwood....

How long have you been working at Downe House?

I have been at Downe House for 22 years. I worked in the Catering Department for 18 years and then went on to work as a House Matron working all over the school but mainly in Aisholt.

What is your favourite memory of school life?

My fondest memory is of the day a girl put a goldfish in the drinking water tank in the Main Dining Room years ago, much to the fury of the Catering Manager. Why she was so angry I don't know as I had to clean it out and refill the container. I thought it was very funny!

Who or what is the naughtiest girl/moment you have come across?

Naughtiest girl - probably Lily Fortescue. She used to throw her rubbish out of her window in Willis. I made her put it all in a rubbish bag. But I was very fond of her she was enormous fun. The noisiest girl (I know you have not asked me this question Grace), was you, by a mile! The decibels in the room trebled when you came into the dining room but all was forgiven when you bought me a fluffy fan from a shopping trip.

If you could swap places with someone for a day who would it be?

I would like to swap places with the Catering Manager so I could spoil all the girls with a fabulous meal.

Which Downe House old girl would you like to have back in the dining room?

There are two girls I would like most to see - Sarah Richards (DH 2003) and Zoe Nicholson (DH 2009).

If you were Headmistress for a day what would you change?

If I could be Head I would change the School uniform to Navy.



Zoe Nicholson (DH 2009) and Grace Regan (DH 2009)

Grace Regan is studying English at UCL and can be heard on Rare FM in her weekly radio programme 'Grace and Guest' - Thursday 3pm - 5pm. Tune in on www.rarefm.co.uk.

Something to Celebrate



Libby Fellows (DH 2003) married Jonathan Beake on Saturday July 16th, 2011



Rebecca Sketchley (DH 1997) married Jason Cloke on July 23rd, 2011



Wedding Photography

Hester Marriott

(DH 1987) is a graduate of the London College of Printing and a member of the British Institute of Professional Photography (BIPP). She has over 12 years'

experience as a freelance wedding photographer and is a recommended photographer at some of the UK's top wedding venues. She is based in London and Hampshire but undertakes commissions throughout the UK and

overseas. Hester is known for her beautiful images, outstanding photographic products and attention to detail.

<http://www.hesterphoto.co.uk/>

Weddings

Libby Fellows (DH 2003)

Rebecca Sketchley (DH 1997)

Jess Marsh (DH 2002)

Catrin Llewellyn (DH 2000)

Would you like to share your happy news and photographs? Please let us know at:

foundation@downehouse.net

Engagements

Julia Flint (DH 2002)

Fay Smallwood (DH 2004)

Bright Young Business Brain



Lizzie Fane (DH 2004) has been identified as one of Britain's brightest young business brains. She launched ThirdYearAbroad.com, offering advice on living, studying and working abroad, after she experienced difficulties abroad during her third year at university.

The Independent newspaper featured 10 successful young British entrepreneurs, some of whom are Virgin Media Pioneers who were offered support, mentoring and peer-to-peer guidance in setting up their businesses. In the article Lizzie writes -

'By offering free advice and support, inspiring case studies and a showcase of the huge range of careers open to graduates who have studied abroad, we can help students see the value of an overseas placement. Solving a problem you have personally experienced is a great foundation for starting a business - you understand your target market and know you can help make lives better. Entrepreneurs need to possess - or quickly learn - a huge number of skills. Coming up with an initial idea is the easy bit.'

Read the full article online:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/analysis-and-features/the-people-who-want-to-make-jobs-not-take-jobs-6261617.html>

Lizzie Wins a National Award

We are proud to announce that on the 17th November Lizzie Fane won a prestigious 'Future 100' award.

The Future 100 Awards recognise the success of young entrepreneurs aged 18-35 who demonstrate entrepreneurial flair and innovation in progressing a responsible business venture.

Congratulations Lizzie!

The 'Class of 1975' Reunite



Back row: Antonella Harvey, Daphne Baker, Sue Phillips, Jo Woodhouse, Amanda Fuller, Ghislaine Galbraith, Gilly Guy, Jane Heywood-Lonsdale, Jo van Straubenzee, Jo Cherry, Lucia Vivian-Neal, Amanda Clezy, Louise Pearson
Middle row: Kate Crookenden, Clare Alsop, Anabel Temple, Sarah Hustler, Clare Harris, Mary Fraser
Front row: Katie Morgan, Mandy Cotton, Julia Jacomb-Hood, Catherine Palmer, Annabel Hope, Sue Tylden-Wright

Catherine Palmer (nee Jackson/CJ) organised a reunion in June for the 'Class of 1975'. Twentyfive former Downe House girls met at her home in Fulham for dinner. A further six were sadly unable to make it.

Most guests had not seen each other since they left – some 36 years ago – so you can imagine the noise levels!

Catherine writes, 'It was wonderful to see each other but the evening went far too quickly for us to catch up properly with everyone!'

CJ (Catherine) would love to hear from anyone else who left in 1975 so that she can add them to the list for the next reunion! Contact hwapalmer@aol.com

Daughters of Downe House

We welcome to the community a number of new girls who have had previous generations of their families educated at Downe House.

Joining us are:

Molly Adams – Granddaughter of Elizabeth Farrer (DH 1947) and Aunts Corty, Jan and Sarah all attended Downe House.

Rosie Craig – Daughter of Joanna Craig (néé Gardner DH 1982)

Minna Conybeare-Cross – Daughter of Camilla Conybeare-Cross (néé Robb DH 1983)

Elizabeth Tatham – Granddaughter of Christine Elizabeth Colby (DH 1950)

Skye and Poppy Wilson – Aunts: Victoria, Alice, Beatrice, Henrietta and Lynne as well as several great aunts are all former pupils of Downe House.

Catharine Wippell – Daughter of Emma Wippell (néé Wirgman DH 1986)

Our next 'Daughters of Downe' lunch will be held on Tuesday 21st February at 1pm in the Main Dining Room at Downe House. We look forward to celebrating with our connected families.



Minna Conybeare-Cross, Molly Adams and Poppy Wilson



Rosie Craig, Catharine Wippell, Elizabeth Tatham and Skye Wilson

Downe House welcomes visits from our alumnae who are considering sending a member of their family here.

To receive a prospectus, arrange a visit or attend a prospective parents' morning, please contact the registrar Angela Nutt: nutta@downehouse.net or 01635 200286.



The Foundation Office aims to encourage life-long connections with our alumnae and their families by providing memorable experiences and opportunities that inspire continued support of Downe House.

The 'Class of 2001' – Ten Year Reunion

Lucy Brain (DH 2001) reports

Although the pouring rain tried to dampen our spirits, a swift relocation from the Battersea Park bandstand to the Prince Albert pub enabled the Class of 2001's ten year reunion to go ahead on Sunday June 12th, 2011.

In attendance: Lucy Brain, Katie Wilcox, Chloe Barrow, Emma Pinney, Serena Stewart, Emma Harrison, Rachel Colville, Lucy Legh, Laura Barneby, Fleur Stewart, Nicki Kent-Lemon, Sophia Vaughan, Emily Dawson, Alexandra Bagge, Laura Priestly, Suzanne Doran, Rachel Clayton, Camilla Day, Polly Hewlett, Mary Gomme, Kate Pumphrey, Fran Harkness, Alex Popoff, Fenella Crane, Emma Jenkins, Louisa Bradford, Lizzie Gilpin, Camilla Greenaway, Kitty St Aubyn, Tessa Elliot Lockhart, Georgina Scott, Emily Atherton.

I have so far gathered approximately 40 entries for an updated yearbook but would love more people to email me on brainlucy1983@yahoo.co.uk with their latest news (as short or long as you like) and photos, so I can arrange a really great update for those who were unable to attend.



Lexa Mixes with Royals

Lexa Palfrey (DH 2009) is the Guest Relations Manager at the 'Rawla Narlai' hotel in the heart of the Rajasthani desert.

On 22nd October the Royal Family of Jodhpur descended upon Narlai to mark the beginning of Diwali celebrations. Five of our best suites (or 'Luxury Heritage Rooms' in hotel lingo) were prepared as the Family and their entourage arrived at the gates in pristine white 4x4s for a short holiday. Guests were initially confused by the behaviour of the staff, who abandoned their posts in order to welcome the Royals by bowing to kiss their feet and mutter 'Kamagni Hukum' before scampering off again to resume their work. CMS (the younger of the Maharajas) came this time with a present each for Elizabeth and me. Elizabeth, being a closet chocoholic, was given a gigantic bar of Toblerone (of which I am yet to see a piece), whereas I was the proud owner of a state of the art television and Sky box in my tent! Here I am in the middle of the Rajasthani wilderness, with Sky, whereas at home in Hampshire we still live in the Dark Ages and only get channels 1 to 5 on a good day!

With the arrival of such distinguished guests coinciding with the beginning of Diwali, it was unanimously agreed that Rawla Narlai should be the venue in which hold the annual village meeting; which turned out to be another excuse for an opium ceremony. The village



elders, wizened old men with weather beaten faces in bright pink and white turbans all appeared, stooped over their walking sticks as they hobbled eagerly towards our small Hindu Temple in the hotel's courtyard. Nothing of note was discussed in this 'meeting' and the greatest concern to all involved was who was going to prepare the opium, whether or not you would like some more 'chai' and who was going to get some more matches for the 'beedies'.

Watched by highly astounded guests, the villagers and our staff sat and became more and more 'zonked out' as they drank pure opium out of each other's hands, slurping their way through pints of this amber liquid. After a couple of hours, once they had decided that enough was enough, futile attempts were made by the intoxicated men to descend the eight temple stairs in order to return home to their wives, who no doubt would severely scold them before sending them for an

afternoon nap without any lunch. I have it on good authority that as opium is an appetite suppressant (also they had been munching handfuls of sugar and coconut all morning) this punishment was not too severe and they would not be too perturbed by it.

Flora (our resident restaurant consultant) took a break from the fiery furnace of the kitchen to sit and puff her way through a few of these local cigarettes (filled with tobacco and wrapped in a tendu leaf) to calm her nerves before embarking on an 8 hour train ride to her next project in Goa. She has promised me that she will return again soon to check not only that our chefs are keeping up her high standards of delicious food but also making me jealous with an enviable tan from the sunshine down south.



DHSA Drinks Party

The Downe House Seniors Association held their annual Drinks Party at the Turf Club in London on Wednesday 5th October. This year, Old Seniors who left between 1960 and 1978 were invited to reunite and reminisce.

Would you like to join the DHSA? Not sure if you are a member?

For more information contact the DHSA administrator, Mrs Lucy O'Meara – dhsa@downehouse.net



Old Seniors from the year 1960–1978 at the annual DHSA Drinks Party

Dates for the Diary

- **FRIDAY 9th DECEMBER** – Senior Carol Service
- **TUESDAY 21st FEBRUARY** – 'Daughters of Downe': an annual lunch for current families who have had more than one generation educated at Downe House. (1pm – 3pm Main Dining Room).
- **10th – 13th APRIL** – **DOWNE HOUSE IN HONG KONG**: a series of receptions and small events to connect with the Downe House community (past and present) in Hong Kong.
- **THURSDAY 10th MAY** – Alumnae Reception (Lansdowne Club, London): details to be confirmed (6pm– 8pm).
- **SATURDAY 19th MAY** – DHSA Annual General Meeting – 10.45am – 4pm (The Boardroom – Wakefield House, Downe House).
- **SATURDAY 26th MAY** – Careers Platform (Downe House): a networking event for current girls, parents and alumnae.
- **SATURDAY 30th JUNE – SUNDAY 1st JULY** – Founder's Weekend: an 'open-school' event for current girls, parents, alumnae and members of the wider Downe House community.

For details on any of these events please contact Lucy O'Meara.

t: 01634 204719

e: foundation@downehouse.net

New Business Directory



Do you run a business or provide a service? Are you an artist, author or musician seeking to promote your work or attract commissions? Would you like to let a property for holidays in the UK or abroad? We would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to make use of our new Business Directory.

In the spring we will launch an enhanced section of the Downe House website specifically for the 4,000 members of our alumnae community.

We will shortly be sending out, via email, a Business Form on which you can register your details for inclusion.



All enquiries to foundation@downehouse.net

Contact us:

If you have news to share, questions to ask or details to update, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Lucy O'Meara or Michelle Scott

E: foundation@downehouse.net

T: 01635 204719 or 01635 204702



Join us on Facebook

Downe House Alumnae

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/130918540289990/>

Please remember to let us know if you move house or change email address so that we can continue to stay connected.

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e: smartypartylondon@yahoo.com

t: 07824 700432



Downe House in Hong Kong

Do you live or work in Hong Kong or China?

We are holding a series of events from the 10th April - 13th April 2012, at the Island Shangri-La Hotel in central Hong Kong.

We hope you can join us!