

**Dear Alumni member,**

What a summer it has been, it started badly and luckily got better. July saw the electronic brakes on my car fail; that was bad enough but then my right foot slipped under the clutch and got stuck. No brakes, no hand brake (electronic), and I could not slow down by changing gear. 6 near misses. But luckily, I am ok, shaken and stirred. The only damage was a burst tyre.

Well September has arrived, and another academic year has started. Pity we haven't finished the last one yet. Traditionally September starts for me with putting the finishing touches to the [2023] examination papers then its headlong into assessing, but teams are still working to sort out this summer's assessments.

Anyway, this newsletter was going to be a celebration of returning to some semblance of normality after the pandemic and the fresh start but as you will see it is tinged once again with sadness. This summer saw the passing of three members of the Alumni.

But on a brighter note the James Baines Room at school is back in use and the archive can once again be re-housed.

Once again, this newsletter is running to six pages so some of the information planned for this edition is being moved to October. Looks like October's edition is close to being finished already.

The Alumni Wartime Project

The Alumni website features a different Poultonian every week. In the Summer I started again with the earliest one I had which was 1939. Looking through the magazine during the war years I noticed a number of correspondences from the Old Boys (OB). The school sent out Christmas parcels to the OB and in turn the OB wrote back to the school to keep everyone informed as to what was going on. I thought it would be a good idea to take these correspondences add a bit of backstory and place it in the school archive. Well, once I had started it became iteration (Computer Science term) one tiny seed grew and grew. Now there are three books, one completed and two ongoing. I am trying to get Book two completed by November and book three completed by the Spring.

Stronger Together

The Alumni is here to help and support you. Its members have many skills, expertise, and friends to give you advice and support if we can.

This section of the newsletter is therefore here to help especially at this strange time we are living in.

Contacts**Baines Alumni****Baines Alumni email**

Bainesalumni@btinternet.com

Facebook

Baines School 300

Baines Alumni website

<https://e-voice.org.uk/bainesalumni/>

Chairman: Alumni

Muriel Ryding

Secretary: Alumni

David Astall

Former Pupils Association

If you wish to join (£10 per year) please contact Paul Bamber (FPA Secretary) on fpa@baines.lancs.sch.uk.

An [application form](#) is available on the Alumni website.

**Former Pupils Association
2021/22****President**

David Astall

Secretary FPA

Paul Bamber

Treasurer FPA

Mick Baron

Former Pupils Association: email

fpa@baines.lancs.sch.uk

Book one is the back story of all those OB who died in WWI (44 of them). The names of these are written on the School War Memorial.

Book two is for those boys (71 of them) who were killed in WWII plus their backstory. The names of these are noted on the panels on the back wall of the school hall. They used to be part of the Memorial Reading Desk.

Book three is for the correspondence in the Poultonian plus the backstory from some of the events and personnel.

They are a fascinating read, showing bravery and sadness. However, it has taken as while to complete these as many of the tales are harrowing and therefore when I had completed a day's work on the books, I had to go for a walk to relax.

In the October and November newsletter I will explain how information on the project was found, especially when only a name and part of the service is given for example: Arthur Pope, Royal Engineers. Private. I will also explain how the correspondence was transferred to book form – not an easy process.

Click here to read [Book one](#).

Whilst writing these books I came across Edward Herbert Charles le Marchant and conversed with one of the current members of the family who claimed that he had never been at Baines or even been in the North having attended Harrow. So, I gave her the evidence – I think she is still in therapy having had one of her ancestors living North of Watford.

Additions to the Memorial

I have asked the Headteacher to consider adding any service personnel who died on military service after WWII to the War Memorial. If you know of any, please let me know.

The aim of the Alumni

When the Alumni was formed in 2019 our objective was to foster a link between the present school community and the former members of both staff, friends and pupils. The pandemic helped us to add another aim to help each and every member of the Alumni in any way we can.

Helping does not mean giving money necessarily but giving time, skills, advice and expertise. We all have different skills and different ways in which we can help others.

Baines School

Official school Facebook page

Baines School

School contact

Helen Kenyon

hke@baines.lancs.sch.uk

FPA AGM

As soon as I have any information about the delayed AGM, I will send out emails etc.

Poultonian



Every Monday a copy of the Poultonian is posted on the Baines Alumni website. Currently I am posting the 1940s editions on the website. These show and insight into the school during the war years.

Following this I will continue posting copies up to 1979, hopefully by then some of the older copies will have been scanned.

Poultonian copies can be found here: [Alumni website](#).

Support

Looking for former colleagues

If you would like to make contact with former colleagues or staff then please get in touch and we will be happy to help, if we can.

A success story as well

I recently had an email from Prof Alan Dronsfield wanting information about former music teacher, Walter West. The resultant mailbag was super, and I am glad to say that Alan has now been put in touch with Barbara Jones, Walter West's daughter.

Walter wrote several pieces of music, one of which was an Elegy. This was never published or recorded but after Alan Dronsfield heard it being played at Liverpool Cathedral, he is arranging to have it recorded in the Liverpool Cathedral in September. A copy will be placed in the Baines Archive.

Any type of kindness helps, for example Muriel Ryding has been practising her skills in repairing one of the photographs and its frame from the archive, former colleagues and old boys keep us informed about what is going on and another former pupil has offered to buy an document cabinet to help keep some of the photographic archive safe and protected. Every little bit helps.

A few days ago, I received an email from School about a past pupil – the late Steven Beech.

Featured Alumni Steven Beech (90 – 97)



Some of you will remember Steven (90-97) at School. He was born in Stockport and moved to Staining with his family in 1983. He attended Staining Primary School before moving to Baines. Steven had a passion for science sparked particularly by Mrs Royle, his favourite biology teacher. He was greatly involved in sports and represented the school at cricket, rugby, athletics, football, and basketball (where he also had trials for North of England schools' basketball team).

This photo of the school football team was taken at Bloomfield Road prior to the Year 11 Schools Final. Reading from right to left - Ben Keen (Capt), Andrew Branthwaite, Steven Beech, Andrew Kennedy, Chris Marsden, Simon Moorhouse, Richard Boydell, Nick Ruman and Kieran Lawton (both hidden behind Mr Callagher), Ian Hodgson, Tim Fail, Sean Cochrane, Andrew Blythe and Richard Smith. Steven remained in close contact with many of the friends he made at school.

From Baines he went to University of Birmingham where he graduated in 2001 with an Honours degree in Biological Sciences, making more friends attracted by his infectious love of life, and his culinary skills which made him particularly popular.

He was then based in London studying for a PhD, and joined Qiagen, a Bio-Tech Company in 2007. He initially worked in Technical Support and then with the Field Sales team. In 2013 he was offered a promotion and the

Thank you - Scott Law



Recently this message appeared on Facebook from Muriel Ryding

We have numerous photographs of *whole school, form, Sixth form and sports groups. Some tend to be large and difficult to store (900cm) and so we are looking to buy, beg borrow (but perhaps not go as far as steal) a plan chest to keep them safe.*

A few days later this message appeared.

I feel that seeing that you gave me an extra week off in the 5th form I owe you one 😊 If you message me the contact details for delivery, I'll order one. Thanks to you and the others who put the great photos and memories on the site 👍

Thank you, Scott!!

De Ja Vue

The school was closed on the instructions of the Medical Officer of Health from March 18th to April 14th. This was a precautionary measure to prevent the outbreak of an epidemic, and we are pleased to state that it proved to be effective.

This report from the Poultonian was not from 2021 but from April 1942. Proving what goes round comes round.

Advertising

We are living in strange times and the pandemic has hit people hard but if you would like to advertise your business then there is a section on the website to do this free of charge.

New on the website

I am making little tweaks to the website; but we do need a new website. A new page has been added called Baines wartime Project which will feature the three books mentioned in the newsletter.



opportunity to relocate to San Diego, California, which seemed to increase his popularity amongst friends and family! He lived and worked in the US where he thoroughly enjoyed the lifestyle.

He was due to be a best man at the wedding of Ben Keen in June 2018, he and Ben having been the closest of friends from meeting before starting school in Staining, and then together at Baines. Tragically, in May 2018, during the stag weekend in Miami, Steven was killed.

As everyone who knew him Steven was full of joy, laughter, love and mischief. He was a larger-than-life character who lived his life to the full. Steven gave the ultimate gift of life, as a registered organ donor, by immediately saving two people's lives with his kidneys. Steven's family and close friends, aim to build a legacy to the person he was.

The Steven Beech "Be Better" Foundation

The foundation's objective is to promote and advance activities that Steven was involved in and was passionate about. The key areas are, the promotion of organ donation, support of students particularly in scientific education, victim support, animal welfare and sporting activities building a legacy to the person he was.

Organ Donation:

The Foundation want to promote the saving of lives through organ donation by raising awareness and making grants available for research in U.K. and U.S.A.

Scientific Education:

The Foundation want to support the advancement of scientific education by making grants and awards to students in full-time education, and to those in educational research establishments in the U.K. and U.S.A.

Victim Support:

The Foundation aim to provide support to U.K. based families of murder victims, wherever in the world the murder takes place, by providing advice, through donations to charities, and providing payments for items, services and facilities.

Animal Welfare:

The Foundation aim to promote domestic animal welfare through donations to animal care charities and shelters by making grants available in the U.K. and U.S.A.

Amateur Sport:

The Foundation want to promote amateur sport by providing support and facilities for playing football and rugby.

Please visit stevenbeech to view the website.

In memorium

From time to time we have to report on the sad loss of colleagues.

John Huyton

John, lived in Singleton and at one time was a special Needs mentor in the school, working under Barbara Gaskell. As a singer in Bob Richmond's choir, he was known to many staff.

Roger Brearley (left Baines 1963)

Roger was the son of Ken Brearley (Past President 1958/59)

He joined his father's firm of stockbrokers James Brearley and Co. with offices in Blackpool, Southport, Preston & Kendal.

Dianne Champion

Dianne was a member of the Art Department at School as well as the Former Head of lower School.

From Margaret McCann, former Maths and IT teacher. Diane was always bright, vibrant and positive during her time at Baines. Other former staff and pupils have sent condolences. I will combine these and send an email of them to her family.

Reopening the James Baines Room

Recently Muriel Ryding and I went back into school and made a start on reinstating the James Baines room to house the archive. Thanks to the generosity of former pupil Scott Law we will soon have a cabinet for the larger paper items in the archive. Muriel took away one of the old pictures which had suffered with the damp and is making repairs to both the photograph and its hanging.

Hopefully soon we will be able to restart the Tuesday get togethers.

Alumni members

We feature in the newsletter Notable and Featured Alumni. Everyone in the Alumni matters, whatever job they do. If you want to let others know what you have been doing since leaving Baines, then please let me know and I will add it to the newsletter and website.

Dianne Champion

Dianne was a teacher of Art at School as well as the Former Head of Lower School.

Those that knew her will have known that she became ill at school and left school to live in Spain where the climate was better to help her illness. Unfortunately, she died on Friday 20th August at the Hospital La Fe, Valencia, Spain. She had endured her illness for almost 20 years but thankfully she died without pain or discomfort. Her partner Doug was able to be with her at the end. Guy, her son, a former pupil at Baines had arrived that morning so was able to spend the afternoon with Dianne. Unfortunately, Katie was mid-flight at the time but was at least able to say "Goodbye" to her Mum.

Throughout her illness Dianne never lost that ability to laugh at situations and coped manfully not only with the illness but also the frequent, and often embarrassing care. I am sure she will be remembered by many different people for many different things.

Personnel memories of Dianne

In that eventful year in school 1992 when some staff embarked on the Yorkshire Three peaks, the Lyke Wake walk and the Three peaks challenge someone suggested that I go as a member of staff on the holiday to Les Arcs, France. Ten days in a ski resort in the middle of August – what could go wrong?

It started well at school and then went downhill fast, the guy walking in front of the coach with the white handkerchief didn't worry me too much but it was an omen for things to come. On to Dover with a coachful of excited pupils then the channel crossing. At one point the waves were higher than the boat then we were riding the waves. There were a few green faces – but there was more of that to come. Then as the temperatures rose, we set off across France to Paris where the coach broke down, on a roundabout on the ring road in soaring temperatures and no way of getting off the coach. Eventually we were sent to a yard to wait for the relief coach.

Eventually we arrived at the hotel and settled down to food. The garlic mushrooms arrived – yeah right!!! Other staff were enjoying them too, until the waiter happened to mention to Eileen Attias that they were not garlic mushrooms but – Escargot (snails). Oops that green look reappeared.

The kids were looking forward to white water rafting on the trip, but the French did not release enough water into the river so there were a load of rocks sticking above the waterline. Now when a rubber dinghy hits a hard rock it bounces and those sitting in the boat bounce out – it was

Articles

If you have any photographs or stories you would like published in the newsletter or website or placed in the archive then I am pleased to include them.

School Archive

As mentioned previously in this newsletter the school archive is ever growing, both the physical archive and the electronic one. If you have anything to donate then please either send them to the Baines Alumni email address or drop them into school, telling the office staff they are for the Alumni.

We are also looking for members of the Alumni who could help clean/preserve some of the artifacts we have collected.

Also, if you wish to add a recording of your memories at Baines to the archive then we do have recording equipment to help in this process.

Headteacher's Newsletter

The headteacher's newsletter is available on the Alumni website and is sent with this newsletter. From time to time there may be other notices sent by the headteacher and these will be posted on the website.

To read the newsletter on the website please click this link. [Newsletter](#)

And finally...

Round up

Margaret McCann

Former Mathematics and ICT teacher Margaret McCann fled North of the border following retirement from Baines. She has recently had a new lease of life – new eyes. As like many others she has had her cataracts done and can now see things much clearer. And yes, it was a dagger.

Hiking news

In next month's newsletter there is a report on the Three Peaks Challenge which was undertaken by staff and a former pupil thirty Years ago.

strange we did (a lot). I was black and blue. And as with Guy Champion I inspected the underside of the boat several times whilst under water.

Even with all these disasters and there was more, there was one person with a smile on face throughout – Dianne Champion.

Another thing I am grateful to Dianne for is that she introduced me to writing, although my readers may not think this to be a good idea! Graham Stanley, Blackpool Zoo director, and a parent of two boys in the school was writing a book on Lemurs for the London Zoological Society (ZSL). He needed someone to help him, which I duly did. However, I used a word processor which had never been used previously to write a book for the ZSL. After a great deal of fear and trepidation from the directors of the Zoo they allowed it.

Call for more information.



This newsletter is for everyone that is part of the Baines Alumni therefore if you have any memories, events, tales you would like to share, then please get in touch and I will include it in the newsletter.

More information is needed from the 'younger' members of the Alumni.

The former pupil that undertook the challenge was Matthew Beresford, son of Gordon.

Congratulations to Matthew who is a keen runner/swimmer as he has just completed the Frog Graham Round. The challenge involves running just over 40 miles, ascending and descending 15,750 feet over the NW Lake District Fells. Swim Bassenthwaite Lake, Crummock Water, Buttermere and Derwentwater before finishing where it all started at Moot Hall, Keswick. So a mere stroll in the park!

Bit of Trivia



This is Bassenthwaite Lake, the newest and only Lake in the lake District.

Paul Robinson

Just heard that former pupil Paul Robinson and his wife are expecting their third child (another girl). Due on 25th December. Whats the betting she will be called Holly?

Newsletter compiled by

David J Astall, President of Baines FPA and Secretary of the Baines Alumni.