



## Dear Alumni member,

Who said, 'Hard work never killed anyone'? When I find them, I will sue them. I came close to it this year with three life threatening infections and the horror is still not over. I realised the work that I could do when I was 20 I could no longer do now, a frightening lesson to learn. So, I am taking a few days off work, and relaxing by writing this and carrying out work on the website.

As you may have noticed a new title for the newsletter. I thought we were in need of a change. The school magazine used to be known as The Poultonian; so I thought why not The Bainesian. In the Poultonian the pupils and masters were known as Bainesians so let's keep the history alive.

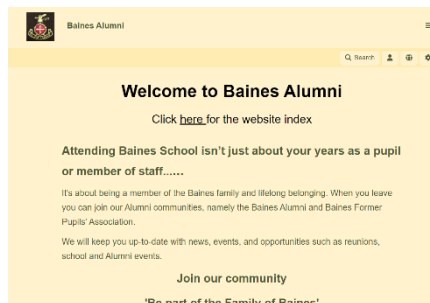
We have come to the end of the Academic Year and with a delay in the fortunes of the school, soon there will be potentially a new chapter for Baines School. We would also like to wish all the school students the best of luck in the forthcoming examination results.

David

## Revamp of the website

It's been a long time coming but at last I have found the time to revamp the website with a new livery and a new index. Although it is far from complete at least it is a start.

The new colours in the welcome page, rather than the yellow on brown I have gone for brown on yellow to make it clearer to read. It has already been mentioned in dispatches in a positive way from the Superhighway the organisation running the back office for the website.



I have included a much clearer index and I have also revamped the 'Meet the Alumni' section. This now allows you to send me your details to add to the ones listed. The Poultonians will be moving back into the open area rather than in the Alumni Section and when I can get back into the James Baines Room in school I will scan some of the older

## Community Section

### Communication links



To contact me about the newsletter or website or to contribute simply email:

[bainesalumnu@btinternet.com](mailto:bainesalumnu@btinternet.com)

**Former Pupils Association: email**  
[fpa@baines.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:fpa@baines.lancs.sch.uk)

### Social Media



Baines School 300



Baines School

### Baines Alumni website



This is the general website for all Baines Alumni news.

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

If you wish access to the Alumni Members Area, then please contact me.

### Baines School Website



This is the link to the main school website

<https://baines.lancs.sch.uk/>

## Interactivity

Click on the images shown to link to the websites/email.

## Baines Archive



The archive was nearly lost a few years ago by an over-zealous Headmaster. Gradually we are

rebuilding the archive but in order to preserve it for future generations we need to scan each item and store this electronically then the original remains in tact.

**Where do you want to go?**

Click on the image to take you to the area of the website you wish to visit



The school has amassed a number of different items for the archive. Many of these are physical items, however to preserve the archive we aim to digitise many of these items and post them on the website.

**Baines Archive**



This was formed in 2019 as a non-fee paying organisation. Every member of the school over the years is automatically a member of Baines School Alumni. The Alumni also covers former staff, governors, and Honorary members.

**Baines Alumni**

editions; unless someone else wishes to volunteer to do this [wink, wink].

Therefore the plan is to create a digitised archive which will then be stored on the Alumni website.

However, before this can take place we need a lot of help in scanning items for the archive.

We also have a lot of photographs where the pupils and staff are unknown. If anyone can help please contact me. I will place these on the website.

## Baines School Golf Society

On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024 the recently (re-) formed Baines School Golf Society had their first major competition of the golf season and rekindled a tradition that has run for many years.



A number of former pupils joined the competition. Two supporters of note, were Mike Ardron (looking dashing in his striped Baines prefect blazer). Mike was at Baines School for 8 years, joining the Preparatory (Junior) Department in 1943 at 8

years of age. [Yes, Baines Grammar School at that time had fee paying Junior Classes].

Another octogenarian and old boy of the school, with plenty of stories to tell, was Arnold Robbins. He is pictured here with David Uphill.



The current members of Staff were delighted to meet former past pupils and particularly grateful to them for sharing their stories of Baines family and providing the trophies.



Golf Title. Second was David Uphill, while the winner of the Ladies competition was Jo Hutchinson.

## Finding former friends

If a name is not listed in the directory and you are trying to find former pupils/colleagues, then please contact me and I will see what we can do.

## Stronger Together

As I emphasised in my speech this year Baines Alumni and FPA are here to help and support you. Its members have many skills, expertise, and friends to give you advice and support if we can.



We are also here to help the school and many members can use their skills to help the youngsters of the day.

Career development is very important, and some members already give support and advice to pupils looking for a career in certain fields. Why not join them !

## Drop in Sessions



The school has agreed that the James Baines Room will be made available, outside examination periods, to Alumni/FPA members every Tuesday during term time. If you wish to visit, please contact me.

The James Baines room is in the lower playground and used to be the Headmaster's office in Whittington's time, the tech office, and sixth form study room depending on how old you are.

The event provided a fantastic day's competition and everyone said they thoroughly enjoyed the day and are looking forward to a rematch next year.

This is an event that could attract old and young alike. So any members who like knocking a little ball around the greens into a little hole why not be part of this event. You can see I am really into golf. Information is in the Community Section on the Right Hand side of the Newsletter.

### **From the Poultonian Archive Unexpected visitors**



The school had an unexpected visitor on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1994 in the form of Norma Major, wife of the then Prime Minister John Major.

The school had expected to welcome Baroness Blatch – the minister for Education accompanied by local MP, Keith Mans and Sir Robert Balchin, the Chairman of the Grant Maintained Schools Foundation. Shortly before the visit a call came through to say that the PM's wife would also be visiting.

Members of the Sixth Form Choir and Orchestra gave a performance of Vivaldi's Gloria which the opera loving Mrs Major greatly enjoyed.

It was noted that during the visit that Mrs Major commented on the hard work and the pleasant atmosphere in the school.

### **Not telling you who told me this one A visit by Prince Eugene (7<sup>th</sup> April 2006)**

In 2006 the school was visited by a real Prince. In those days, and it probably happens now, there was a diary in the front office where staff wrote in any visitors that were coming to the school.

Now one member of staff, who was a bit of a wag had written in the book, Prince Eugene visiting. It was a Friday afternoon and normally the headteacher, Roddy McCowan didn't check the diary. On this occasion he did; and the said member of staff was duly called into the Head's study for a 'chat', and the raising of the head's blood pressure – for writing stupid things in the diary. After a few minutes of him going red with shouting there was a knock on the door and an announcement that the teacher's guest had arrived – Prince Eugene!!!!

It's a shame Roddy didn't see Prince Eugene who was sporting a purple goatee – just like an American Billy Connolly.

### **Obituary**

As the list is rather large it has been placed on the website in the Alumni Section. [Click here](#) for the link

### **Alumni Snippets**



For those of you that visit the website will notice the Alumni Snippets.

This is your way of letting others know what is going on with your links with the Alumni.

Click the link below to see the up-to-date Snippets.

[Alumni Snippets](#)

### **Contacts**

**Chairman: Alumni**  
Muriel Ryding

**Secretary: Alumni**  
David J Astall

### **Announcements**

If you have any announcements of birth, marriages or deaths please contact me and I will include them.

### **Joining the Alumni**

Everyone that has attended the school or worked at it is automatically a member of the Baine Alumni.

Membership is free and allows you to access the Alumni Members area of the website then simply visit the site and register.

### **Being added to the mailing list**

If you wish to join the mailing list and receive information and the newsletter simply email me at: [bainesalumni@btinternet.com](mailto:bainesalumni@btinternet.com) and send me your details.

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### **Baines School Former Pupils' Association**

#### **[FPA News](#)**

The website also includes news for the FPA. If you wish to contribute to the news then please email me.

## President's BBQ

This takes place in late August in St Annes. I have sent out my invitations but if anyone else would like to join us then please contact me by 17<sup>th</sup> August.

## The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

At the recent AGM in April one of our younger members of the FPA mooted that the Association should sponsor The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the School. The FPA has a long Association with the DofE and whilst running the Award in school I remember asking for monies from them for the expedition section therefore it only seems fitting that the FPA should sponsor the Award on a more formal footing. The FPA will still be giving monies to other deserving causes in the school.

The Award has run for a long time in the school; in fact it predates both Lancashire's and Wyre's DofE Award Scheme. It is a really worthwhile scheme which helps young people to develop their life skills, teamwork and independence. The Award in school do need help moneywise especially for the expedition section but members can help in other ways, giving their skills and advice to the young people. If anyone is interested in helping, then please contact either myself (and I will pass on your details) or Dan Vernon at the school.

## New kids on the block

A new school magazine has hit the streets – the Buzz. This is written by students in the school.



There are eight members of the team writing the new magazine; the Editor being Alfie Holmes whom I met at the recent School Celebration Evening. Alfie told me he wanted to be a journalist of which this will stand him in good stead. The next edition is at Christmas.

I will be placing a link to it on the Baines Alumni website.

## New members - FPA

We recently had three new members of the FPA.

**David Hoyle** - David attended Baines in the 70s

And two of our younger members

**Eleanor M Parnell**, left 6th form in 2016

**Philippa L Parnell**, left in 2018 after 5th year/Year 11.

## Contacts

### School contact

**Anna Bailey**

[aba@baines.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:aba@baines.lancs.sch.uk)

### Former Pupils Association

**2024/25**

#### President

David Astall

#### President Elect

Muriel Ryding

#### Secretary FPA

Paul Bamber

#### Treasurer FPA

Fred Vickers

## Joining the FPA

If you wish to join (£10 per year) please contact Paul Bamber (FPA Secretary) at

[fpa@baines.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:fpa@baines.lancs.sch.uk).

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

## New members

**David Hoyle**

**Eleanor M Parnell**

**Philippa L Parnell**

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## Baines Volunteers

Are you willing to volunteer to help digitise the Archive?

Jobs would include helping to catalogue it; or scanning the items so that they can be stored electronically. There are also a number of images that show 'unknown' pupils that need identifying. Any help will be most appreciated.

## Extras for the archive

We also need items for the archive so if you think you can help in any way then please do not hesitate to either contact me. Items can either be physical items or scanned and electronically saved.

## School celebration evening

I represented the FPA and Baines Alumni at the School Celebration evening, where the guest of honour was England T20 cricketer and former pupil Richard Gleeson.



It was a good evening with good music from the school music group. I had a good chat to staff I worked with and a long chat to Richard Gleeson about his cricketing career. Richard has battled illness in his cricketing career and spoke to all assembled about the trials and tribulations of starting late to cricket and suffering a broken back. A cricketing injury that is only too common.

## Looking to the future

None of us are getting any younger. The Former Pupils' Association was founded in 1906; a mere 118 years ago. Formed by the 'Father of the School', Thomas D Whittington, former Headteacher. The Association was at its strength during both World Wars binding the family of Baines together, sending out Christmas presents to the front and receiving replies from the 'boys'. Some of these replies are featured in the resource, Baines Brief Lives – the backstory of the boys and masters that fought in the First World War. A copy of this is on the website.

Then it fell into a slow decline as times changed and the need for a FPA diminished. We have over the past few years fought for its survival. At one point we thought we had lost the fight and that it, like many other FPA, had sealed its fate. But drive, encouragement and enthusiasm has kept it going.

There have always been a number of 'younger' members of the FPA but due to distance it is difficult to form a get together. In the past this would not have been an issue as many pupils stayed in the same area.

Now we must turn to this next generation to help keep the flame alive and hopefully with encouragement they can attract more 'younger' members. With the school entering a new phase in its life perhaps this is the time when the FPA can also have a resurgence.

The Association is now needed more than ever, to bind the family of Baines in a rapidly changing world. There is strength in numbers and if we wish to see the Association to survive, we need to change and enhance the next generation. The FPA needs a shot of adrenalin and then perhaps it will survive for another hundred years.

It was proven in the recent Annual General Meeting that the younger generation injected life into the FPA and came up with the ideas that had eluded us for a long time. We have three new members in David Hoyle, Eleanor and Philippa Parnell. The latter two are part of the next generation. We need to look to these and existing 'younger'

## Noticeboard

As I receive notices from the Alumni they will be published on the Noticeboard section of the website.

## Social Events

As I receive information about any social events they will be published on the Events Calendar on the Alumni Website.

If you wish to publicise any Alumni events or add to the noticeboard, then please do so.

## Forthcoming events

President's BBQ – 24<sup>th</sup> August

## Calling all younger members of the Alumni

Why not share your progress after leaving school. Simply send the information to me and I will publish it on the newsletter and on the website.

## Poultonian

We have copies from 1908 to 1980 some as bound copies. Some of the copies have already been scanned but the plan is to scan all of them and make them available on the website.

If you would like to research copies then contact me and I will post them on the website or pop into one of the 'get togethers'.

## Headteacher's Newsletter

The headteacher's newsletter and any relevant correspondence is available on the Alumni website. To read these on the website please click this link.

[Newsletter](#)

## The Buzz

There will be a link to this new school magazine of the Baines Alumni website.

## Meet the Alumni

We need to hear from you and would like to contact me and tell us what you have been up to since leaving school.

members of the Association help give it the boost to help with its survival.

We would also like to hear from you all about events/reunions from the school that you are involved in. We hear from time to time of reunion why not share your stories? Or tell us what you have been doing since you left school. Many of you must have some great stories to share with the rest of the Alumni.

### **Ramesh Gandhi**



Former governor of the school Ramesh Gandhi died, at home on 20<sup>th</sup> June at the age of 88. I taught his sons, Mark and Neil and therefore met him and his wife, May many times in school.

He was a dedicated Heart consultant surgeon who saved the cardiac unit at Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

Ramesh was born in India and worked in several hospitals around the country, before taking up a post of surgeon at Blackpool Victoria Hospital in 1978. He was the man that put the cardiac unit on the map and made it one of the best in the North West and beyond.

Ramesh retired in 1994 but rather than taking things easy he continued to help the Vic by becoming director of fundraising and raising a massive £2.36m for the Vic's MRI Scanner Appeal. As well as saving the Cardiac Unit he was also involved in the Vic's Macmillan Windmill Suite, a dedicated research and development centre for oncology and haematology trials.

He was a founder member of the Fylde Coast Hindu Society and keenly involved in Water Aid, a charity focused on water, sanitation and hygiene. He even found time to be a councillor in fact the first Asian elected in Wyre. He also became deputy mayor, chairman of the Organ Donation Committee and volunteer health mentor and was awarded the OBE for services to the community in The Queen's Birthday Honours of 2007.

Whilst at Baines Ramesh and his wife May threw themselves whole heartedly in being involved with the Friends of Baines and later in the governance of the School.

Ramesh was a wonderful man a true gentleman. He was so well regarded in his professional field, in the wider community and in school but always with the strong support from his family. The support from a family is a very rare commodity but it is the cornerstone and support in everything one does.

Condolences to May, Neil and Mark and their families from myself, the FPA and the Alumni.

### **Share your story**

As I produce the newsletter myself it helps if members can send information to me to include. I am always very proud to share stories from the Alumni Community.

As this newsletter and the website is for everyone that is part of the Baines Alumni then if you have any memories, events, tales you would like to share, then please get in touch and I will include them. These can be written or recorded (video or audio).

### **Call for golfers**

As you may have read in the main part of the newsletter; the report on the Baines Golf Society.

Any golfers who would like to be part of the Baines Golf Society please contact Sean Bullen at school. It's a good way of re-kindling old friendships.

### **Items for the Newsletter and Alumni News**

The newsletter and the Alumni News section of the website is very important to let other members of the Alumni know what is happening and as a way to keep in touch with each other.

If you have any items for the newsletter or Alumni News then please email me at [Bainesalumni@btinternet.com](mailto:Bainesalumni@btinternet.com) and I will endeavour to publish the information.

### **From the electronic world**

Message from John (Bob) Leigh posted on Facebook

"I was known as Bob Leigh. I was looking for photos of Baines Grammar and came across the Italy trip in 1961 posted by Robert Wright. As I was ill on the day of departure I did not go on the trip, which has been a memory for me all my life".

### A thanks from The Headteacher

In the recent Headteacher's Update Mrs Clare Doherty, the Headteacher, was keen to pass on the school's sincere thanks to all those who were involved in the school's recent careers programme and work experience. There were a wide range of experiences on offer including construction, engineering, journalism and sports journalism, physiotherapy, medical (including a neurosurgeon) undertaker, automotive, hair and beauty, football, the army and interior design.

Before COVID students used to carry out work experience by working in offices, industry etc for a week. However, due to COVID and the changing standards of the modern world this has had to stop and the companies visit the school. Under the guidance of the Careers Staff, Miss Kinder and Miss Wilde students' interests were matched to visiting speakers, who spent time talking about their careers, their journey and set a project for the students to work through. It was a very valuable experience which was appreciated by both students and employers. There are also opportunities to extend the range of experience via video calls.

The school would be delighted to welcome former pupils to the programme. If you would like to help, please contact the careers staff directly.

### One mystery solved

In the last newsletter I posted an image and asked who the MP was.



1990/ 91 Graham Nicholls, Wendy Shimmin, Dean Wilson, Vicky Edge-Baron and Simon Quarrie.

The answer as to whom the MP was – it was Keith Mans. Thanks to Ray Wilson for this.

### Yet more mysteries

I have recently placed on the website some images from Robert Wright from the past where we would like you to identify the pupils/staff.

Here is one to whet your appetite.

There are six pictures under **A Mystery** in the Photo Album in the Baines Alumni section.

Perhaps Ray Wilson may know the answer to this as the former teacher ic ATC



### Caption Competition

This was from the Internet showing former head of Sixth Form Louise Oliver and her husband.



Can you add the caption?

### Tours of the school

At the FPA Get together this year, the Headteacher Clare Docherty announced that if anyone would like a tour of the school then this could be arranged.

On 16<sup>th</sup> July former pupils Mark Bywater and Alan Goodwin, who now lives in Sicily visited the school and was shown around by Sean Bullen who's father attended the school at the same time. I unfortunately was ill and could not join them on the visit.

If you are interested in a tour please contact the Head's PA directly.

### Comedy of errors

If you find any spelling mistakes or grammatical errors then please send to [no-reply@BA.com](mailto:no-reply@BA.com). Any other errors please contact me and I will endeavour to correct them.

### Newsletter compiled and written by:

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