

QUANTOCK SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

School Reunion 23rd-25th August 2003

THE Big Reunion finally took place with people arriving at the school from Friday evening onwards. Mike Blake and Shelley (Michelle Blakley) ended up with most of the event organising, fortunately this resulted in a considerable stock of beer for the weekend ahead. Matron was on hand providing plenty of food for the barbecue on Saturday afternoon and had also prepared rooms on Gerry's (Warriner) corridor.

When we arrived it was a pleasure to see the main school building, where Matron still lives, in such good condition. Matron is doing a fantastic job of renovating some of the rooms such as the library and there are ongoing repairs to the outside of the building. The grounds are extremely well kept and the whole setting was a testament to what must surely be a labour of love for Mrs Peaster.



The Building Looks Great

32 former pupils, or inmates as Laurie Booth refers to us, together with other friends and family members, made it to the reunion.

Here is a list of registered attendees:

Andy Davies	89
Ben Honeyands	90
Cara Sutton	91
Carmen Stamper	93
Caroline Allen	95
Dicky Holdsworth	90
Emma Francis	91
Heather Francis	93
James Palmer	85
John Clifton	89
Jules Makey	89
Karrie Wakley	95
Kevin Strachan	78
Lauren Hulston	93
Laurie Booth	65
Lee Rowland	89
Mark Davies	76
Michelle Blakley	90
Mike Blake	90
Mike Hubber	97
Naomi Hubber	95
Nick Dykes	75
Paul Watson	89
Phil Nuttall	89
Rob French	89
Sandy Thomas	90
Scott Davis	89
Sean Harvey	75
Sheena Goldie	93
Suzie Goldie	91
Will W-Wilkinson	87
Zara Martin	90

Matron had spent quite a bit of time digging out old photographs and laid them out for inspection and purchase in one of the old classrooms near the library. These included a range of school year photos as well as smaller group and individual pictures. There was also a range of school clothing on offer, with ties, jumpers and sweatshirts left

over from the past. Some of the jumpers even had pupils names sewn into them if anybody out there is wondering what happened to theirs.

The format for the entire event was extremely relaxed and informal. Due to the superb weather a lot of the time was spent sitting outside chatting.



Enjoying The Excellent Weather

We set up camp on the grass adjacent to the dining room, (older inmates will know this as the "new gym"), with most of Saturday spent meeting people from several decades of Quantock with ages ranging from early 20's up to somewhere around 50 (sorry Laurie).

Saturday evening Matron laid on dinner in the old Gym which is located next to the library. Later that evening we moved to the room where in the 70's we used to take English lessons with Mr Holmes. A disco with flashing lights and the full works was set up and whilst there were no handbags in evidence the girls certainly made full use

QUANTOCK SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

School Reunion 23rd-25th August 2003

of the dance floor. I have to say this was an extremely strange experience to be sitting around, smoking and drinking amidst the bright flashing lights watching people on the dance floor all in the same room where we sat our O'levels (GCSE's for the younger inmates).

General socialising went on well into the night with the hardcore revelers making it to their beds at around 4.00 pm. Surprisingly everybody made it down to breakfast which was served at 9.30 by Matron in the main dining room (the old new gym). There was quite a bit of clearing up to do from the night before but this was very efficiently dealt with by a ready supply of willing volunteers.

Highlights for the first day including Naomi Hubber getting told off twice by Matron, once for chasing Jubs in the corridors and the second time for bouncing to high on the bouncy castle which was finally inflated on Sunday morning when we eventually found the pump mechanism.



Setting Up the Bouncy Castle

Apparently this bouncy castle actually belonged to the school and was used by the pupils during the last few years of occupation. During the reunion we heard stories of boys and girls climbing inside the bouncy castle, where the air goes to inflate it, and getting up to all sorts of mischief. It seems amazing that there were never any accidents.



Some Of The Attendees

With the absence of any organised activities on the Saturday it was surprising to find that there was no time to fill in during the day. The hours flew past as we all talked and got around to meeting each other. I think we would all agree that the Quantock experience was quite unique as schooling goes and many of us obviously have very fond memories of our time there. It is apparent that despite which era you served your time in you have a great deal in common with all former pupils.

Over the weekend everybody got on well, traded stories old and new and generally enjoyed the experience. There are many

school reunions which, through the Friends Reunited phenomena, have experienced mixed results, however, the Quantock School reunion generated a positive response from all those involved. This despite the fact that a number of those attending had reservations prior to the event, with some saying they felt hesitant about passing through the school gates when they arrived. This was soon forgotten once they met up with old friends, some who hadn't seen each other in nearly 30 years.

Everyone who attended Quantock School will remember the library which also served as the place for detentions so some will remember it better than others. What is remarkable is that the sketchings of John F. Kennedy and Sir Winston Churchill, which were certainly there in the early 70's, still hang above the book shelves.



Churchill In The School Library

One of the teachers from the 80's and 90's joined us on

QUANTOCK SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

School Reunion 23rd-25th August 2003

the Saturday. All those who knew him during their time where very pleased to see him and chat about the old days, unfortunately he had a prior engagement and had to leave us in the afternoon.

A group photograph was taken with Matron after which Mike Blake presented her with a bunch of flowers to say thank you for her kind hospitality and for making us all feel so welcome.



Mike Blake & Matron

Mutterings are already appearing on the school website regarding a repeat reunion next year. Plans are to chose a date which will be more convenient for those with families and so a weekend outside the main summer school holidays is likely. If you are interested in finding out more information about this proposed event please visit the website and register your interest in attending.

Reunion Testaments:

“What a brilliant weekend. Its been a while since I last larged it like. I even

recognised some faces and recalled their associated names despite 15+ years of life being applied to the owners”.

Will Whiteway-Wilkinson
(Class of 87)

“Mike you did a great job, if you plan another reunion I will always help you out. It was great to see you all, let’s not leave it so long this time”

Zara Martin
(Class of 90)

“A great time was had, even if I ended up with a hang-over every morning! I hope it isn't too long before another one is planned, it was really good meeting new friends and re-acquainting with old ones”.

Caroline Allen
Class of 95

“What a successful reunion that was. It was good to see lots of people, many new faces, and to generally chat about old times and new, chill over the odd drink (and by odd I mean the Jagermeister brought by Mark), is it really bonjella?. I now must catch up with my sleep. Lets all do it again”.

Nick Dykes
(Class of 75)

“I had a great time, even if it was a bit spooky to

wakeup in a Quantock Dorm. If you're reading this, and didn't make the reunion - you were missed”.

Mike Blake
(Class of 90)

“Great weekend, thanks Mike, fab fun meeting everyone new and old, great doing the washing up again after 37 years!”

Laurie Booth
(Class of 65)

“It was a very positive experience, not only to see old friends again but to meet people both from my era as well as those attending Quantock right up to the time it closed. What amazed me was how much at home everybody felt with each other, even where the age gaps where significant. It was a great event and I am sure we will all be back again”

Sean Harvey
(Class of 75)

“Thank you for an enjoyable weekend. It was good to meet old friends and meet some of the younger generation from Quantock, it appears that we all share the same feelings for the old school”

Kevin Strachan
(Class of 78)