



Issue 25 - September 2020

Remembering Christian Strover

It is with the greatest sadness that we must inform the OE community that Mr Christian Strover (Staff 1956-97) passed away on 23rd August, 2020 at the age of 88. Christian was undoubtedly one of Emanuel's greatest and most influential teachers and in due course a full tribute will appear in *The Rose and Portcullis* magazine. Over an incredible 41 years of service, he inspired thousands of boys, as well as leading an incredibly busy musical life beyond school and was a popular figure at our OE reunions. Many OEs were especially delighted when he conducted at the OE choir reunion in January 2019.



By way of immediate tribute, we are rerunning the address written by former Headmaster, the late Mr Peter Hendry, who worked with Christian from 1959-1984, which was given at the Summer Serenade of 1997 and later republished in *The Portcullis* when Christian retired.

You can read the address [here](#).

Summer community outreach

40 of our sixth form pupils volunteered over lockdown and the summer holidays with our local



state primary school partners. 33 of them volunteered at catch-up summer school programmes for Year 1 and Year 5 pupils at St Mary's and Sacred Heart RC Primaries. Our pupils supported literacy, maths and art lessons and planned and ran sports sessions.

The Executive Head of the two primaries, Jared Brading, stated the Emanuel pupils were all 'fantastic and such a credit to the school. The children from St Mary's and Sacred Heart loved working with them and the teachers really appreciated the support.'

In addition, seven sixth formers, plus other Emanuel children, alumni and friends, volunteered at the Smile Brigade, a community group providing food for families in need. Our volunteers sorted through donations, bagged fruit and vegetables and put together care packages.

Hermione Leitch joins 'The Sixteen' choir

We were delighted to hear that 2017 leaver Hermione Leitch is one of the new members of *The Sixteen*, a highly prestigious choral choir which performs all around the world and is led by Harry Christophers.

Hermione will be a member of the *Genesis Sixteen* cohort, which is the UK's first fully funded choral training programme for singers aged 18 to 23. It has been specially designed to help participants to navigate the testing transition from student status to life as professional performers.

Hermione was an outstanding singer and actress who was both a Music and Drama Scholar during her time at Emanuel. Some of the many productions she featured in include *The Little Shop of Horrors*, *Les Miserables* and *The Producers* (she is photographed playing Audrey). She also starred in *The Suitcase Kid*, which Emanuel performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2016. After leaving school, she had a role in *Suppliant Women* at the New Vic Theatre.



In her final year, Hermione was awarded the Headmaster's Prize for Excellence for her outstanding contribution to music and drama and won the Raeburn Cup for singing. She was also Leader of the Orchestra, Lead Violin, Leader of the Choir and Soloist. Congratulations Hermione!

OE elected York University SU President

OE Patrick O'Donnell has been elected President of the University of York's Students' Union. Patrick is studying Politics and International Relations at Derwent College and in his time as a student has been part of the Irish Society, Labour Club and Amnesty International Society as



well as serving a year as Deputy Politics Editor for the student magazine *Nouse*.

Patrick was an outstanding pupil at Emanuel, winning the Headmaster's Prize for Excellence for his role as Deputy Head Boy and his commitment to societies and fundraising. Not surprisingly, Patrick was a keen member of the Politics Society and was always engaged in debate with his peers and classmates. Coincidentally, one of his oldest friends from his early days at Emanuel, Ben Margolis, is the current [President of Cambridge Student Union](#).

You can read more from Patrick [here](#).

Leavers v remainers cricket match

Last Sunday we were delighted to host the one and only cricket match of the season. The School 1st XI challenged the OE leavers of 2020 in a contest nicknamed the Remainers vs the Leavers. Due to Covid-19, this will probably be the only school cricket fixture of 2020 (with the school proudly retaining its 100% winning record!) Or you could perhaps argue that next year's 1st XI, captained by Billy, have started the 2021 season early and are off to a flying start! Either way, it's a win, win....



In an entertaining fixture the Remainers won the match by four wickets and bowled out the 'Leavers' for 131 after 29 overs. The Remainers then took control, scoring 132 for six after twenty overs. But the star of the show, and making his 1st XI debut, was Ben who took a hat trick in the twentieth over.

The Rose and Portcullis magazine issue 6

The latest edition of *The Rose and Portcullis* alumni magazine is about to go to print. The edition features OE interviews, an article on members of staff Joyce Acan, Laura Fitzgibbon, Anabel Zaratiegui and Sophia MacMillan, who all celebrate 20 years at Emanuel this year; school news and updates; a piece on OEs involved in drama, a special goodbye to Simon Gregory after 34 years of teaching at Emanuel and an obituary to Christian Strover.

Your magazine should drop on your doormat by the end of October if we have your full postal address. If you would like to receive a copy and are not sure whether we have your address, please drop us a line at oe@emanuel.org.uk



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Mini astro



The old cricket nets, which in recent years have resided on the right of the fives and tennis courts, had a major revamp over the holidays. The two bowling lanes have been replaced by a mini-astro with four retractable lanes. If you look at the main photo (with the school in the background) you can see the wiring which the netting will use. The batsmen will stand close to the line where the photographer is standing.

When cricket is not being played, this fantastic multi-purpose all-year-round facility will be used for football, netball and hockey drills. It will also be a terrific play area for pupils during break and lunch times.

Artist Larry Peters' solo exhibition and book

Artist and former pupil Larry Peters (OE1951-58) recently hosted a large solo exhibition of his art in the ArchitekturForum in St. Gallen, Switzerland. He also produced a book on his work as an artist, *Looking at Art*, which was presented at the exhibition in June.

In his book, alongside his paintings, drawings and reliefs, Larry has included examples of his short stories, poems and text-works in English and German. In his short story *Christmas Spirit*, he mentions his art master at Emanuel, Morley Bury, who was largely responsible for opening the door to Larry's career as a freelance artist. Larry says he has always felt grateful for this.

After leaving Emanuel, Larry studied at the Chelsea School of Art and then the Royal College of Art before working in a small studio in Wimbledon on geometric abstracts and kinetics. Larry has lived and worked in St. Gallen since 1969 and his art work forms a part of numerous public and private collections.

Larry very kindly sent a copy of his book, *Looking at Art*, to the school archive.

If you are interested in finding out more about Larry's work either to collect or show, please email oe@emanuel.org.uk and we will pass on any messages.



Memories of former staff: Bill Purkis

Bill Purkis was a teacher at Emanuel for 34 years and Head of Geography and Clyde House for over twenty years. Bill was known for his 'laconic sarcasm and wit' as noted in his *Portcullis Valette* in 2009. We think the photo on the right was taken by OE David Bowles who referred to it as 'Bill's 1970s hippy phase'.

Bill's great love was football and he was the staff team's most reliable full-back for many years. He is also a lifelong Manchester United fan and supported them through the thick and thin of the lower reaches of the English Football League in those days.



After an Emanuel Alumni Facebook post attracted lots of comments, we caught up with Bill during lockdown to ask him a few questions. You can read his interview [here](#).

2020 virtual rowing awards

During the pandemic, the rowing team were unable to train on the river but they continued working hard from home by joining Zoom workout sessions and taking part in virtual team challenges, remaining positive and focused throughout.

The annual rowing awards ceremony usually takes place at the end of the summer term. This year, the awards took place virtually via Zoom. It was a wonderful occasion, with many laughs, applause and tears. There were two wonderfully moving speeches from the Boys' and Girls' Captain of Boats and it was a great opportunity to say farewell to the Upper Sixth rowers and to celebrate the continued commitment of our rowers through difficult times.



Emanuel News episode 17



Episode 17 of Emanuel News was filmed during lockdown and presented by pupils from their own homes. They shared some highlights from school life including creative challenges, charitable initiatives and sporting achievements.

You can view the episode [here](#).

Virtual summer time concert

Over lockdown, we saw uplifting virtual performances from many choirs which we shared with you in the last e-news. The Emanuel Summer time concert took place online for the first time ever this year too. 28 pupils from all year groups submitted video performances of themselves singing or playing pieces they had been working on during remote learning.

You can view the virtual concert [here](#).



New biodiversity garden



We have developed an area at the top of the old school driveway into a new garden designed to provide a series of mini habitats: a wildflower micro meadow, a small pond, wood and rock piles, insect hotels plus bird houses and potentially two bee hives. Our aim is to support the curriculum areas by providing an area for the collection and analysis of various species, pond dipping, surveying organisms through the year as well as looking at the effect of the urban environment on the community that develops.

The garden area will be enhanced with the addition of a greenhouse with solar panels and will be used by both pupils at Emanuel and other members of our local community.

From the Archive

Here is one of our all-time favourite images from the school archive – the legendary Eddie Fisher (OE1905-15) winning the long-jump for Emanuel in a major Public Schools event held



at Stamford Bridge. The unknown photographer has truly caught the moment and it is no surprise it appeared in several newspapers.

Eddie was an outstanding athlete who held several public school records which stood long after he was killed in action in 1916. There is evidence that Emanuel schoolboys as late as the 1930s discussed "beating Fisher's records" and whether it was possible.

By the time he took his commission at 17 years old, Eddie had achieved so much at Emanuel. He was a Prefect, House Captain of Lyons, a Cadet Lieutenant in the O.T.C. and Captain of one of the most successful fifteens of the time.

OE lockdown tales: Grant Upton

Grant Upton (OE1970-77) was a highly distinguished school rower and went on to have a notable, varied and well-travelled career. Grant both coxed and rowed during the period when Emanuel boasted one of the strongest Boat Clubs in the UK and was a member of the crew who represented Britain in the World Junior Rowing Championships in Montreal in 1975. Our archivist, Tony Jones, caught up with Grant over lockdown:

"My first love of school sport (and hard freezing winter work) was rowing with Emanuel as First VIII cox from about 1972 when I was 13 until 1976. In 1975, we represented Great Britain at the World Junior Championships in Canada and in 1976 we got to the final at Henley Royal Regatta, just losing to Holy Spirit from the USA.

You can read Grant's interview [here](#).



Peter Jones Esq., N. G. Roberts, C. E. Roberts, G. W. Lemmens, S. H. Lambert, G. Upton, A. J. P. French, G. J. G. Roberts, M. D. Field, R. A. Downie.
Represented Great Britain in the World Junior Rowing Championship, Montreal Aug. 1975

Class of 1970: 50 year reunion



The Class of 1970 were looking forward to celebrating 50 years since leaving Emanuel with an event at Dacre Day in the summer. Sadly, the event was cancelled due to the pandemic. We were really disappointed to miss the opportunity to meet these OEs again.

Our archivist, Tony Jones, put together an online collection of photographs, class lists and newspaper clippings from the mid-1960s as our class of 1970 OEs were unable to come in and view them. You can see the photos [here](#).

IT and remote learning

From March onwards, when the school was forced to close, the IT department were responsible for developing and supporting the complex migration to online teaching for all pupils. The switch from the classroom to home learning was effected remarkably smoothly and we are grateful to the efforts of the IT support team who facilitated this.

You may be surprised to hear that IT is currently led by Emanuel's longest serving member of staff, Mr John Layng. When Mr Layng arrived at Emanuel way back in 1982 to teach Biology and coach rowing, he was already writing programs for his BBC microcomputer but could never have envisaged that 38 years later he would find himself leading the IT department. In addition to his IT role, John is Assistant Head, in charge of co-curricular education.



Josh Blows, The Royal Academy of Music



The Royal Academy of Music has been training talented musicians to the highest professional standards since its foundation in 1822, making it the oldest conservatoire in the UK. Over the summer, we caught up with OE Josh Blows, who is currently studying for a Bachelor of Music degree, about his involvement with the Academy.

Have you always been interested in music?

I am very lucky to have a musical family, so music has always been a part of my upbringing but for a long time I found classical music very boring and much preferred rugby. I first started learning the violin when I was four but that was a big mistake for me and everyone else in my household! When I was 12, I discovered the trombone and that is when things really started to change for me. I got very lucky with inspiring teachers and then when I was 15, I was in the Verbier Festival Junior orchestra and it all took off from there.

What was your involvement in music at Emanuel?

I think I probably spent about 80% of my time in the music department whilst I was at Emanuel. The sheer number of musical groups going on during lunchtimes and assemblies was really amazing and it kept me very busy. As a result, it is certainly the aspect of Emanuel I miss the most; Sarah Potts, Nick House and Simon Gregory did a fantastic job to make it such comfortable and creative place to be.

Read the full interview [here](#).

Interview with former School Captain, Mike Henton

Over the summer, we interviewed former School Captains about their time at the school and their lives since. We will be running the interviews as a regular feature in the OE e-news. We started with an interview with [Brian Haydock](#), the earliest School Captain we are still in contact with. In this edition, we caught up with Brian Haydock (OE1951-59). In his time at school, Mike was School Captain, Captain of Boats and House Captain of Rodney.



What are your best memories of Emanuel?

My best memories of Emanuel are the informality of teamwork as part of a boat crew at the weekend and the formality of returning to school on Monday as well as the mutual respect between staff and pupils. I was also lucky enough to meet the girl that became my wife at the school dancing classes, when girls from Streatham High came to Emanuel. I still can't dance, but the marriage has lasted.

Read the full interview [here](#).

Dan Martin: First team coach for Ashford WFC



Emanuel has re-introduced football as a core performance sport for the lower school and the move will be extended to other years in the future. One person who welcomes this move is Dan Martin (OE2009-16), who was desperate to play during his school years.

After leaving Emanuel, Dan graduated with a first in Physics from the University of Birmingham, where he was Manager and Head Coach of the men's development squad and then coached the women's 2nd and 3rd teams.

Dan is currently a PGCE Secondary Science (Physics) student at St Mary's University, Twickenham, and is also a first team coach with Ashford Town WFC.

Obituaries

We are sorry to announce the death of Duncan DM Campbell (OE1945-54), Hugh Shirley (OE1959-67), Keith Briars (OE1964-66), Reverend Michael Stevens (OE1949-57) and John Hendra (OE1955-62), pictured on the left.

Obituaries can be found in the latest edition of *The Rose and Portcullis* magazine, due out by the end of October. The magazine will also be available online in the [Publications](#) section of our website.



Digital archives



If you haven't already, take a look at the new archive material which is now available on the Emanuel Digital Archive system [here](#) (or click on the image to the left!):

User name: genguest

Password: genguest

All older links in our OE e-news, apart from the most recent issue, will no longer function. If you have saved the link as a favourite, make sure you update it.

Some of the latest updates include:

- History of Emanuel School by Scott Giles, two versions (also supplement)
- Dr Iain Reid's Rowing Photographic Memoir of the 1960s (covering the first golden era of school rowing. This is genuinely amazing and well worth your time. It is an absolute treasure trove).
- Emanuel 1999/2000 Girls' Sports Yearbook.
- OE Peter Harrington's excellent History of the Houses.
- CCF Operation Hebrides, 1962 and 1967.
- Vintage sports day, cricket, rugby and drama programmes and fixture lists.
- Rose and Portcullis Issue 5 (2019).
- Second World War Memorial Book 1939-45.
- 2009 Reunion to celebrate the school's evacuation 1939-45.

<http://emanuelschoolheritage.cook.websds.net/>

Old Emanuel Luncheon Club

We held our Spring meeting at the Union Jack Club (Waterloo) just before lockdown, but both the Summer and Autumn lunches had to be cancelled. Our Winter Lunch is scheduled for Monday 7 December at the Union Jack Club so let's hope we can get back together then. For



more information about the Luncheon Club
please contact me on stuart@cwt2001.com.
All OEs will be made very welcome.

Stuart Cameron-Waller (Hon Sec)

We hope you enjoyed reading this edition of the OE e-news. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to oe@emanuel.org.uk. We would also really like to hear from you if you have any news or career updates you would like to share with us. We are always looking for interesting stories for our [Emanuel School Alumni Facebook](#) posts and the e-news so please get in touch.
