

Dear Alumni

Welcome to our Alumni Newsletter for the Summer of 2022. We hope to send out this Newsletter at Christmas and in the Summer, to keep you all up to date with not only what is happening in School, but also with your fellow Alumni.

SCHOOL UPDATE

A great deal has been going on at Rydes Hill since Christmas, and it has been wonderful to have more normal life resuming in School, with Productions, Sports' Days, and other key events taking place as usual.

The Summer Production for Middle Preparatory, Higher Preparatory and Form One this year was "Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat". Those of you who were at Rydes Hill in 2018 will remember doing this Production, with many of the costumes being taken back out of the cupboard (with a little titivation from Miss Boyle) so that they could be used again.



Sports' Days during COVID were split into bubbles and, while we no longer need to do that, having different age groups on different days has been one of our 'COVID keepers'. We had two glorious days of sunshine where children from Nursery through to Form One were able to show their sporting talents. Even the parents got involved, with only four visiting A&E following the Parent Races!



Our new Nursery classrooms have been very well utilized this year, and the popularity of our Nursery has been wonderful to see. Acorns (ages 2-3) and Oaks (ages 3-4) are now full from September 2022 with our current staffing levels. We are looking to recruit and so if any of our Alumni are interested, please contact jacqui.oneill@rydeshill.com for more information.

Thank you to all our Alumni who have sent in updates of how they are and what they are up to. We want to share as many of these as possible. If you have any news to share, please do email jacqui.oneill@rydeshill.com and we will try to include it in the next edition.

Finally, for those of you who remember being taught by Miss Karen Boyle, we will be celebrating Miss Boyle's 30th year at Rydes Hill this September. Not only is this an important milestone for Miss Boyle but is a wonderful excuse for us to celebrate her incredible contribution to Rydes Hill; not only through her incredible teaching ability and superb seamstress skills, but in her role as our School Historian.

VISIT RYDES HILL

We are in the process of applying to be part of Guildford's Heritage Open Days 2022 this coming September. Once details have been confirmed, we will share these via email with our Alumni. However, if anyone ever wants to visit the School, we are very happy to set up individual tours.

LEGACY DONATIONS

Have you thought about leaving a donation to Rydes Hill in your Will? If you and your children have fond memories of your association with Rydes Hill, it is a lovely way to help the School enable more children to access the wonderful Rydes Hill educational experience. It is also tax efficient as most gifts to charities fall outside an estate for inheritance tax purposes. As a small School, we operate on very tight margins and legacy donations would be used to bolster our Bursary Fund to allow a wider range of children to benefit. If you would like more details, or would like to make a one-off donation to our Bursary fund, please email our Bursar Martin.Halsall@rydeshill.com

Sarah Norville



ALUMNI NEWS

Ibby and Zak Mueller

Ibby graduated during lockdown with a BA (Hons) in Geography. In September she will be returning to university (Southampton) for her PGCE - Primary.

Zak is currently in his second year at Swansea University, where he is reading Business Management and Analytics.

They both completed their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards by the end of 6th Form.

Until he went to university, Zak rowed as Stroke for the Langstone Cutters Men's 'A' crew. Zak also starred in Scapegoat which is now on Netflix - he and Lucas Clancy both had speaking parts in the first few scenes whilst they were at Lanesborough (as it was then!)

Raha Hariri

Raha is now in Year 9 at Tormead and has recently been accepted into the National Youth Theatre. Well done Raha!

Bronwyn Wydenbach (left from Form One in July 2015 to go to Guildford High School)

Bronwyn is currently in the Upper Sixth at GHS and hoping to study Architecture at university from September.

She has been playing lacrosse as a goalkeeper for Wales U19 team since 2018, and recently was awarded her 5th Cap, competing at the Home Internationals 2022 Tournament in Edinburgh in the U21A team. As it was the A Team, they were awarded an actual Cap (see photos). She has also been part of and captained the Wales U19B Development Team when they were part of a tournament in Canada in 2019.



Holly Govier

Proud Mum to Blake Charles Govier who was born earlier this year on 19th April 2022. Congratulations!



James (Mike) Rook

Mike worked in Zimbabwe for some considerable time and was Vice Chair of the National Press Club (The Quill) during the mid-1970's. After working for the country's National Daily Newspaper, he went on to join the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) and was appointed Chief Executive Officer at Modern Farming Publications Trust, which published The Farmer weekly magazine. His best-selling memoir, 'Farewell Rhodesia – Goodbye Zimbabwe' is available from Amazon Books.

Carol Gray (nee Freyne)

Carol attended Rydes Hill from 1968-1975. She has worked caring for people in mental health and spent 16 years working in the area of learning disabilities. She turns 60 next year and remembers the School as very caring under the leadership of Sister Patricia.

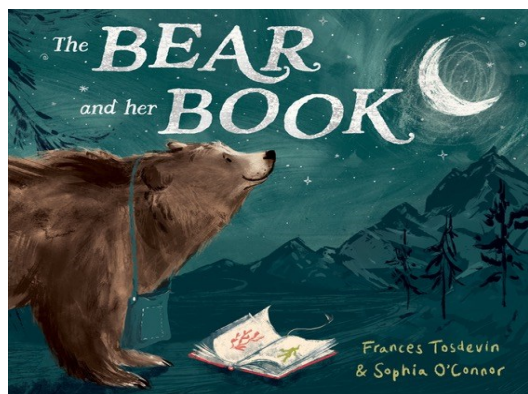
Frances Tosdevin (nee Stanford)

In her mid-fifties, Frances started writing picture book texts and two years ago (when she was 60), had her first offers of publication. This resulted in her becoming a traditionally published author last year when she was 61! The first book she wrote was "The Bear and her Book" (ISBN 978-1912979608), illustrated by Sophia O'Connor. It was published by Uclan Publishing in Oct 2021 and was the Independent's Children's Book of the Week soon after it was published - a great thrill for Frances!

The second book written by Frances, was published very recently on 5th April 5th 2022, called "An Artist's Eye" (ISBN 978-0711264830), illustrated by Clémence Monnet. It is published by Frances Lincoln Children's Books, and is a story about finding your own unique way to see like an artist.

Frances has another picture book coming out later this year, and a fourth currently set for 2023.

Frances has the happiest memories of her time at Rydes Hill, and it was here she first developed a love of creative writing. In fact, she never wanted to leave, and is sure she would still be a pupil here if it was allowed!



Melanie Henin (graduated in 2016) and Loriane Henin (graduated in 2019)

Why do birds have wings? If they did not, they would not be birds, one might think. Melanie's answer was more elaborate since it owed her first place in the St John's College Oxford Inspire Programme last year. She flew to the top in her GCSEs, scoring maximum grades in all of her 12 higher tier GCSE subjects last June, placing her results in the top sixteen in the country. Melanie has since passed Grade 8 in Cello, which she played in the Surrey County Youth Orchestra, and is currently studying for her A' Levels (History, Maths, Further Maths and French). History has remained her favourite subject since Higher Preparatory, hence the joyful evenings she now spends leading the after-school History Club.

Loriane is as fond of English as ever and regularly receives prizes and commendations for her stories and essays. For good measure, she also obtained a Silver Certificate in the Junior Mathematical Challenge last year and gained awards in German.



HISTORICAL UPDATE

Miss Boyle has been keen to use the newly released data from the 1921 census to shed more light on the history of Rydes Hill House:

Just over 100 years ago, the 1921 Census was taken and is now available for study. This is always an exciting time for genealogists and historians as it shines a light into the everyday life of members of your family and the world they inhabited.

Sadly, it wasn't opened in time for the update of the Rydes Hill book but my interest in the history of Rydes Hill continues.



The census data for the *Rydes Hill House* confirms that the house was inhabited by the new American owner, [Mr Robert Hervey Cabell](#) and his second wife Eva Patterson. Their two younger children, Helen (22) and Joseph (20), were still living at home. Robert (52) is the managing director of *Armour & Co* and is commuting to London. Joseph has also joined the company as a salesman but is based in their Guildford office. This may be why the family had bought the house the previous year. Not surprisingly, neither his wife nor daughter are working.

There are 2 visitors in the house on the day the census was taken. The first was an American young lady of 24, Frances Gilman, who may well have been Helen's friend. The second was Jacque Albert de Lailhaear (31), a French citizen who was an exporter of paper. His relationship with the family at this time is unknown but

romance may well have already been in the air as he would go on to marry Helen in 1924, in Paris.

Beyond confirming various information, there was therefore little new to be found. However, the Cabells were not the only inhabitants and the information on their servants was largely new. This can be divided into those who lived in the house and those who lived in a number of cottages in the surrounding area.

Six servants lived in at this time and would have had bedrooms in the small rooms that can be found up the brown stairs and in the rooms off the kitchens. The most senior servants appear to have been

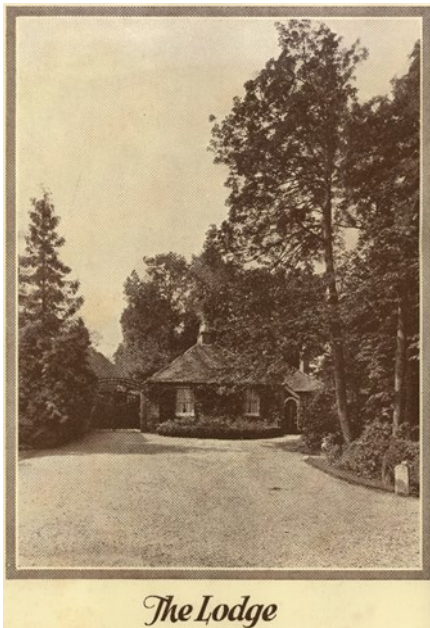
[Ernest Ivan Bell](#), the butler and Caroline Knowles the cook. Interestingly the butler's wife, [Gertrude Louise Bell](#), was working as a housemaid. Rather surprisingly their two younger children had been boarded out down the road at the lodge of *Rydes Hill Lodge*. It may well be that they were waiting for one of the estate cottages to be vacated. One gets the impression that Mr Cabell may well have had to hire whoever was prepared to do the job as servants were becoming increasingly hard to find. From what I have been able to ascertain, Ernest had not been in service before and was working as a milkman in London before the war. He would later go on to work as a riding master.



[Caroline Alice Knowles](#) (36) was a local girl whose family had been in service. By 1901 she was a cook and would continue in this role until at least the Second World War. She was single and her widowed mother and younger siblings were living in one of the cottages that was in Rydes Hill garden. She was helped by a young kitchen maid, [Ada Christina Radford](#) (16). She too was local and before too long was to fall for one of the young assistant gardeners, [Arthur G Grist](#) (18) who was living with his parents at Broomfields. They were married in 1928 by which time Ada had risen to be a cook and Arthur had left service to become a decorator. In the 1960s they joined thousands of other young families to emigrate to Australia.

Living in was also the housemaid, [Emily Bertha O'Brien](#) (26) who came from London and [Frederick Burnell](#) (22) who worked as a footman. As far as I know, he was the first footman who had worked at *Rydes Hill House*. He had been born and brought up in Godalming and had served on HMS *Victory* during the First World War. On enlisting, he was 5 ft 4 inches and had brown hair and blue eyes. No doubt he had grown by the time he gained employment as a footman and may well have learnt the art of waiting at table during his time with the Royal Navy. His life of service was short lived and by 1926 he had left.

One of the additions of the 1921 census was the inclusion of where and who you worked for. As a result, we have a much better knowledge of those who worked at Rydes Hill House but lived out. In addition to Arthur, we know that the gardens were headed up by [John James Huck](#) (46) who lived with his family next to Arthur. He came from a farming family in Westmoreland and having initially tried his hand as a railway engine driver, he had changed track having married Ruth Burdock who had been born and brought up in Rydes Hill. Her father had been a gardener and may have even worked at Ryde Hill House when the Williams lived there. Sadly, James died young in 1926.



All these servants were new to me despite knowing of a number who would work for the Cabells in later years. The exception was [Mr James O'Brien](#) who was to work as a chauffeur up until the Cabells left for America in 1934. In 1921 he was living at *Clock House Cottages* with his wife and infant son. He would later move into the lodge which at this time was being rented out to an employer of Drummonds, a local firm. He was responsible for at least 2 cars including a Royals Royce which were housed in the former stable block, (now our gym). The housemaid, Emily O'Brien, was his sister.

Further information on the Cabell family and other families who lived and worked at Rydes Hill can be found in the *Rydes Hill House - from family home to preparatory school* by Miss Boyle and Mrs Forbes. Please email rydeshillbook@rydeshill.com or you can purchase a copy from the School Office.

We would like to wish all our Alumni a happy, restful, and not too warm summer! Please do send any news or items of interest for the Christmas edition to jacqui.oneill@rydeshill.com