

Freemen's School Association

Registered Charity number 269680

The FSA has two main aims: to provide a social framework for parents and members of staff, and to raise money to use within the school to further the development of the pupils.

The FSA is a registered charity run by the parents and we have had another successful, busy and happy year.

DONATIONS TO THE SCHOOL

This year we funded all the donations requested by the school:

- two telescopes, a telescope camera and a star finder for the astronomy club
- colour printer for the Art department that can produce A1 size copies
- screen printing equipment for the Junior Art department

- specimens for Sixth Form Biology
- Greenpower kit car for use by girls who attend the Young Designers club
- sports shirts to be worn by school teams at athletics, running, and biathlon
- blankets with school crest for school riding team
- camcorder to professionally record events and shows
- one tall ships award of £750, donated annually
- two travel scholarship of £750 each, donated annually
- grant towards the Sixth Form prom, £1,000 donated annually

SOCIAL EVENTS

Throughout the year the FSA organises social events that are open to everybody in the school – parents and staff.

We started the year with our annual Cheese and Wine Evening, which provided the opportunity for all parents to meet up again after the summer holiday. It also allowed the recipients of the tall ships awards – Douglas Young (FSA Award) and Ada Pang (Guild of Freeman's Award) – to recount their experiences of life onboard a boat during the summer holidays, and for the recipients of the travel scholarship – Clara Li and Ada Pang – to regale us with stories of their travels through Scandinavia.

“We enjoyed the summer sunshine sipping Pimms on the terrace”

September also allowed us to enjoy the autumn sunshine at our Party in the Park, a fun event for all the family which drew the whole school together for the afternoon. Families joined together on a beautiful sunny day on the main lawn and enjoyed five hours of non stop entertainment delivered on a professional stage whilst they picnicked or enjoyed food from the barbecue or hog roast. Children from Form 1 through to choirs and bands from the Sixth Form and staff sang and played a diverse musical set which showed the depth and talent of each part of the school. The crowds were delighted by what they heard and saw. In addition to the action on stage, there were football and badminton tournaments and an opportunity to swim in the pool. Around the lawn children bounced on an enormous slide, scaled a climbing tower, challenged each other to a game of human football or bumped into their friends on the dodgems. All that and Noddy was available to give children a ride in his car. The whole day was a tremendous way to bring the school community together – we all definitely had Fun in the Park.



In November we held our annual Fireworks Display and Barbecue. It was extremely well attended and enjoyed by all, and the free glow sticks proved very popular with the younger members of the school.

In December we held the Christmas Fair, which is one of the FSAs main fund-raising events. There was something for everyone, whether they wanted amusements, attractions, raffle prizes, singing staff or a chance to buy presents for relatives and friends. Those who were there were treated to games such as Hook a Duck, Hoopla, and Football Tombola and many more. Santa was there in his grotto, and in the secret room was.... well, that's a secret. It appeared that tigers and lions were on the loose in the School but on closer inspection it turned out to be children with their faces painted! There were stalls a-plenty selling a plethora of items and once all the shopping had been done, there was a chance to relax with a cake and a cup of tea or mulled wine. The Fair raised in the region of £7,500 for the FSA, and also a fantastic £890 for the Royal Marsden Children's and Teenage Cancer Centre, through voluntary contributions at the door.

The year drew to a close with our Summer Ball which was held at the Woodlands Park Hotel in Cobham. We enjoyed the summer sunshine sipping Pimms on the terrace before moving inside to a three course dinner. Entertainment was provided by a disco, a magician and a caricaturist. This was the first time in a number of years that the Summer Ball was held outside the school premises, and proved to be an enormous success.

As well as being social events, the above activities also help fund the donations we make to the school. We are also extremely grateful to the Friday Tea House from whom we receive an annual contribution of approximately £700.

A FINAL THOUGHT

Further details on the FSA and our forthcoming events are on the school website. Also, as with any parents' organisation, we are always looking for volunteers: if you would like to help organise any of our events please contact your FSA Form Representative.

*Maria Anthony, Chairman
and Christina Sparks, Vice Chair*

LYNNE PRYS-OWEN

Lynne Prys-Owen stood down as Chairman of the FSA in September 2009 after many years' involvement in the FSA and six years as Chairman.

Lynne worked tirelessly for the FSA and the School during all the time her sons were at the School. She attended all the meetings and sub-committee meetings as well as the FSA Trustee meetings each year. Under her leadership, the FSA became very much a force for good for the School and the benefit of its pupils and parents.

Lynne Prys-Owen was enormously generous with her time; she was a great organiser with that rare skill of being able to get other people to do the seemingly impossible. She was, as Chairman, an inveterate 'fixer' and she gave her heart and soul to the task in hand.

Lynne was always keen to make a great success of the many FSA socials and other activities she and her team organised during her Chairmanship and as a consequence, many thousands of pounds have been raised for equipment and scholarships which have benefitted many many pupils at the School.

More important than all the money raised during Lynne's time in the FSA is the fount of goodwill which she and the FSA generated towards the School which is something beyond price.

Freemen's is lucky to have such an active and committed parents' association and Lynne's involvement and her own commitment have contributed to that in no small way.

Lynne's two sons have now left Freeman's but she is very much in touch and her fundraising skills have not been entirely lost to the School. In May 2010, Lynne helped organise a very successful Auction of Promises for the Old Freeman's Association. This raised the handsome sum of over £10,000 towards the OFA Clubhouse appeal.

We are all very grateful to Lynne for all she has given to Freeman's and I am sure she will continue to keep in touch in the years ahead.

Mr Philip MacDonald



Old Freemen's Association

PROGRESS ON THE RE- DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR THE MEMORIAL CLUBHOUSE

The spirit of co-operation is strong at the moment so that the Old Freemen are not alone in fund-raising for their much needed replacement to their present rather patched old building.

We hire the Clubhouse out on a Friday morning to some 'Crafty' Ladies – beaders, weavers and knitters and they held a sale of their goods raising £530. We are very grateful to them, as we are to the parents, both through the FSA coffee mornings, suppers and their Teahouse on a Friday afternoon. They have continued to send donations of money which will help us to build a brand new Memorial Clubhouse both for ourselves and for their children.

Fundraising has taken many forms

A Beer Festival: we had a 'Celebrate Real Ale' event on Saturday 13th March for the Old Freemen to enjoy a variety of different beers and the Six Nations rugby. It was a great afternoon and there was a fantastic atmosphere in the Clubhouse. Our thanks must go to Laura Morrison and Dawn Smith for helping with the organisation of the food and ticket sales and to Bill Smith and Ronnie Gummer for setting up and sampling the beer. Also, Ronnie managed to secure sponsorship from within the Old Freemen's for each of the barrels on offer, thank you to all who sponsored us.

A Live Music Night: as a warm up evening to the Easter Tour Laura Morrison organised for Geoff Morrison's band to play at the Clubhouse with guest appearances from other Old Freemen including Rob Reynolds.

Rugby Rocks: Ed Kemp, the Freemen's organiser, left Freeman's in 1998 and after University, lived in Italy for a year doing TEFL before working first as a journalist then as news editor on Marketing magazine. His interest in rugby started at Freeman's and he continues to be passionate about the sport. In December, he set up Rugby Rocks which runs rugby sevens events. His first event took place at Richmond Athletic Ground on 12th June. It featured the launch of the elite National Sevens Series, along with a club and a ladies sevens tournament. There were DJs and live music playing through the day and evening and even a display of power kiting by Flexifoil (a company run by another Old Freeman).

Mr Fruniverse 2010: an Old Freeman's special event. This was an extremely



successful evening with all the guests and contestants having a wonderful time organised by Theo Van Dort and Chas March. The judges this year were Nikki Linsell, Kelly Vanstone and Lisa Joseph who are three of our Hockey players. The winner was Richard Turk.

Auction of Promises: a really special event, held at the school on 22nd May. 110 guests attended including Governors, staff, parents and Old Freemen. Aramark provided us with a delicious meal and excellent service, all their help was greatly appreciated. Philip MacDonald (Headmaster) and David Haywood (past-Headmaster) spent their evening on the stage auctioning all the wonderful donations which we received – we were incredibly fortunate to receive so many fabulous items and thank both of them for doing such a spectacular job.

Our gratitude and thanks must go to all those who donated and also those who were the winning bidders on the night. They enabled us to raise a magnificent £10,250 for our redevelopment. These events would not be possible without the help and backing of marvellous members who are willing to come forward and offer their assistance so our thanks must go to those organisers of the event and those who helped on the night – Laura Morrison, Mary Holloway-Neville, Lynne Prys-Owen, David Harn, Pat Jenkins, Kelly Vanstone and Ailsa Maclean.

Social Events have also raised funds

Ladies' Lunch: held at the Clubhouse on Saturday 20th March where we had six rugby representatives catering for the wives, friends and partners who regularly support the Rugby Club. This was thoroughly enjoyed by all the ladies who felt really pampered.

A Hockey Tournament: on Sunday 28th March Freeman's staff put together a

team to take part, and many of the rugby players managed to put together teams to compete with the hockey girls. This was a great success and we hope will become an annual event.

Easter Tour: we set off on 2nd April and once again went to Sandhills in Mudeford, Dorset, playing against Verwood and East Dorset. Ronnie and Irene Gummer were once again overseeing the arrangements for the tour. This is a not to be missed family event, when everyone has a good time.

Rugby/Hockey Club Dinner Dance: this annual event has now become a joint venture for the rugby and hockey clubs, organised by Laura Morrison. This took place on 1st May at the Queen's Stand, Epsom Racecourse with a three-course dinner and coffee plus a disco finishing at 1am. The rugby and hockey club presented their player awards, and the Super Hundred Club main draw of £2,000 was made.

Leavers' Service and Breakfast on Friday 28th May: this was attended by all Upper 6 Leavers, who had a busy time getting their yearbooks signed. We obtained the highest number of application forms this year but it would seem that not too many, with the exception of hockey, are interested in joining our sports teams. This may be because there were only ladies present – Nikki Linsell, Laura Morrison and Pat Jenkins.

A 60s Decade Dinner: on the Eve of Old Freeman's Day the School organised a Decade Dinner for pupils who left during the 1960s. This is the latest in the series of very enjoyable annual entertainments to which past pupils are invited.

Old Freeman's Day: on Sunday 27th June and all former pupils were invited to attend and have a chance to meet up with their contemporaries.

News of Old Freemen

ROBIN EVE

Congratulations to Robin Eve (1951), our President, and a School Governor on the award of the OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

HAYLEY GRIFFITHS BIDS TO TOP CHARTS

Hayley Griffiths, who studied at Freeman's between 1993 and 2003, released her debut single *Separated by Glass* online, followed by her full album.

Miss Griffiths, who started singing lessons at the age of six, has been the lead singer in the *Riverdance* and *Lord of the Dance* shows over the last five years, and has performed before the Emperor of Japan and in the Kremlin in Moscow.

Hayley has toured across Europe, North America, Russia, Japan and China but said: "The hardest thing has been being away from family and friends. I always look forward to coming home with such excitement and being back in Ashtead. It always feels like a bit of a treat and a holiday to be home."

JOHN MILLS WROTE:

"I am officially a 'Freeman of the City' and celebrated accordingly with my family, whilst following the published guidelines in the 'Rules for the conduct of life' given to me at the ceremony. My parents flew over from Australia to attend this event and my graduation for my MSc in Edinburgh. The Freedom of the City was a very memorable and worthwhile event and I shall always remember it very fondly; thank you to the Secretary for your help this past year in organising this.

50S OLD FREEMEN'S LUNCH AT THE FARMERS' CLUB

Following the very successful lunch in 2008 to celebrate the attainment of three score years and ten by a whole group of Old Freemen, it was decided to hold another lunch on 18th November. This was for the benefit of those who had reached the magic age of 70 more recently as well as those who were now beginning to look forward to even more advanced years. The group of 20 'old boys' and 12 'old girls' mainly consisted of those who had left the school between 1955 and 1957.

BRIAN MEETS THE LORD MAYOR

Brian Clear (1965) was invited by Her Majesty's Consul to meet The Lord Mayor, Nick Ainstie when he visited the USA. It is understood that the School proved a topic of interest to both parties.

IS IT A RECORD?

Last May at the tender age of 51, in 80 degrees heat I played in a Rugby match at Twickenham for Penguin International RFC against a combined team from the House of Lords and House of Commons, to mark both our club anniversaries of 50 and 25 years respectively. The teams included a number of former internationals, British Lions and one Old Freeman. Having scored under the posts, I started my celebratory dance, only to find that former England legend and British Lion Tony Neary had knocked on before passing me the ball.

Julian Lamden

THE SCHOOL RECEIVE A LETTER OF ENQUIRY

My father, Charles Matthew Gray (born 6th January 1895) was a pupil at the City of London Freeman's School in around 1911. I believe he was head boy. I would also welcome any reference to the site of the original school. My father won many prizes and I have several of his leather bound books which he had won for various subjects. I also have a photograph of him holding a pile of these books in the presence of the Lord Mayor.

Pat Jenkins was asked to reply which resulted in Martin having a copy of *Their Moment to Shine* which told him all about the Freeman's Orphans' School at Brixton and how Freeman's has grown from there; whilst she now has copies of the Prize Day photo together with those of the football team, the cricket team and the shooting team at Bisley (she was not aware of this pastime) together with one of the Band. These photos are now housed in the School's Archive room.

More recent leavers may remember Mark Coote, the Careers Advisor, and that he was a candidate for Hastings in the previous elections, which he unfortunately did not win. Whilst on holiday in Cheltenham I noticed his name appearing on the electioneering posters, but sadly he was again defeated by a small margin. Third time lucky we hope.

Old Freemen and Hockey Club founder Nikki Linsell (2002) has recently returned from a rather long stroll in the depths of the Moroccan Sahara desert. Nikki came 624th (out of 1,050) in what is considered to be 'the worlds hardest footrace' - the Marathon Des

Sables or 'MDS'. Olympic gold medal winner James Cracknell came 12th (the best any British man has ever done).



SYLVIA PARKER (1942-2010)

Sylvia Parker will be remembered with deep affection by those who knew her as matron of Philp House. With her warm personality she was ideally suited to her job. Understanding that boarders would particularly miss their families at weekends, she often entertained gatherings to tea and television in her comfortable flat. Other pupils will recall her reassuring care whenever they were sick, or injured on the sports field.

Her life was colourful and varied. She acquired her nursing qualifications during her 14 years as an Anglican nun at Laleham Abbey. Here, she developed a lifelong love of singing, plainsong and music in general. Later, she travelled the world extensively, though Venice, with its art and culture, held a special place in her heart.

Sylvia lived her life enthusiastically and enjoyed sharing it with others. No-one who savoured her superb cooking will forget it. She loved company, good food and fast cars. Her early death, at 68, from pancreatic cancer seems all the more cruel to her many friends.



**CITY OF LONDON
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