

# OJ & Friends Autumn Newsletter



**St John's School**  
LEATHERHEAD

Dear OJs, Former Staff and Friends

I do hope you and your family are all well and have not found the last extraordinary few months too challenging. It has certainly been an eventful time for St John's since our last newsletter in March.

We were delighted to welcome pupils and staff back to the School site in September and are incredibly proud of how our pupils have enthusiastically adapted and embraced the 'new normal'.



The site looks a little different now with a one-way system around the Quad and various other safety adaptations. To find out more about the return to School click [here](#).

Kind regards

Naia Edwards

**A virtual tour of the school is now available so you can see for yourself how the school has adapted. [Do take a look here.](#)**

## Learning in Lockdown

### Virtually St John's

Adapting to life as a virtual school was an interesting challenge for both St John's pupils and staff but one which they rose to with impressive displays of creativity, resilience and good-humour.

[Click here to read more](#)



**We offer our warm  
congratulations to all our pupils**



## St John's Stronger Together

The strength of the St John's community has never been more apparent than in the last seven months as we faced the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the end of March, St John's donated 250 pairs of high quality goggles to the NHS, along with a significant supply of disposable gloves.

Our Nurse Manager took a leave of absence from her role at school to work on the NHS frontline and get involved directly with the clinical response to COVID-19.

Many other staff also committed to help the NHS through the [NHS Volunteer Responders](#) scheme.

## who received public exam results this summer.

### A Level success

We are incredibly proud that over 20% of the year group achieved straight A\*-As and notable successes across the breadth of A level subjects offered at St John's include 100% A\*-B in further mathematics, 90% in history, 83% in English literature and 81% in economics.

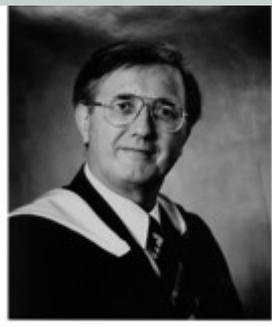
[Click here to read more](#)

### GCSE triumph

Amongst a strong set of results across the subjects, there were some exceptional departmental results including English language and drama where over 80% of results were 9-8s (A\*s) and biology, history, Latin, music, religious studies and physical education which all saw more than 70% 9-8s.

[Click here to read more](#)

## OJ News



### David Brown

It is with great sadness that we learned of the death of David Brown from cancer in July. Headmaster of St John's from 1985-1992, David Brown was responsible for modernising St John's by bringing girls into the sixth form, recruiting female teachers and setting up a boarding house for girls. A full obituary will be written in the OJ magazine. Flowers and condolences were sent to his wife, Tess, on behalf of all OJs.

### OJ named in Queen's Birthday Honours List

Huge congratulations to Jim Warren (West 1954-1958) who has been awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to the British community in the Balearic Islands in the Queen's Birthday Honours List published on Friday 9 October.



### Fond staff farewells

### OJ Committee Meeting

It is always with a mixture of pride and sadness that we say goodbye not only to our U6 but to members of staff who leave for pastures new, including Debbie Burgess (1990-2020) and James Kidd (2006-2020).

We wish all our leaving staff every success in the future. You can read full reports of their careers in the valet section of the 2020 edition of the [Johnian magazine](#) on page 8.

## The 1851 Society



This year, the annual lunch to thank members of the 1851 society for their pledge to leave a legacy to the school was replaced by a virtual tea held on 13 October.

The Head spoke to the members about how the School has coped during the recent events and the transformational impact that legacies have made to St John's. This was followed by a presentation from the archivist celebrating the history of rugby at St John's and the centenary of the reintroduction of the game at the School in 1919.

We are immensely grateful to all those who pledge to leave a legacy to the School. To find out more, or if you would like to discuss a particular bequest, please contact Naia at the Development Office via email [development@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:development@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk).

## Alumni Events

For the time being it is sadly not possible to hold any physical events at the School, but we very much look forward to welcoming you back as soon as this is possible.

In the meantime, we can hold virtual events. We would love to hear from you if you would like us to organise a virtual year group reunion or if you have any ideas for virtual events.

Email Naia Edwards at [development@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:development@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk)



The OJ Committee currently consists of 15 OJs from all different year groups and houses who normally meet twice a year to discuss what sort of events to put on and to generate ideas. Whilst the meeting scheduled for March had to be cancelled, we were able to hold a virtual zoom meeting in September.

The Head, Rowena Cole, gave an update on the activities of the School since March 2020. This was followed by a discussion on the funding of OJ societies and of OJ events.

New recruits are always welcome! To find out more, or to volunteer, please contact the OJ Committee Chair, Mark Cooper (Ch'95) on [mark@cooperandlansbury.com](mailto:mark@cooperandlansbury.com).

## St John's School Leatherhead and the Great War 1914-1919

Copies of this fascinating account of the School during the 1st World War, and the activities of the pupils and staff during this extraordinary time are still available.



*"I have read much on WW1 over the years, but few books have brought home to me so compellingly the great patriotism, courage, and sacrifice of individuals. The book is far more, however, than a catalogue of St. John's war service biographies. It includes most informative sections on aspects of the war, some (to me, at least) ill known. The book is beautifully produced, the research clearly phenomenal, and the mixture of text and illustration outstanding."* William Foot (Surrey 1963)

Books are £25 plus £4.95 p&p

Click [here](#) for more information and to order your copy.

# OJ Sports News



## OJ Runners Round-up

Our first and unfortunately last big race of 2020 was the aptly titled 'Dash for the Splash', that finished with a river crossing on Wimbledon Common. As always this is a great experience with the best that cross country can throw at you. New recruit James Harvey impressed on his debut coming 3rd out of a field of over 300.

The arrival of the lockdown saw the start of a weekly Virtual Alumni Run. School alumni teams were encouraged to submit 5K times of any alumni, pupil, parent, sibling or friend. As a result we gained a huge number of regular 5km times from both parents and pupils, particularly those in the Lower School. It also helped our 'squad', of well over 100 OJs, get involved and stay fit during lockdown.

We desperately hope that this year's Alumni race will still go ahead (on December 12th) on Wimbledon Common. We would love to have OJs of all abilities and ages join us on that day or for any of the other runs during 2021.

If you are interested in taking part and finding out more, please email [ojrunners@outlook.com](mailto:ojrunners@outlook.com) or see our website [ojrunners.com](http://ojrunners.com) for details.



## OJ Cricket Club

Sadly, but for wholly understandable reasons, OJCC has seen very little, if any, activity both on and off the field since playing against the School in June last year. We are still here though and are looking ahead and planning as best we can for fixtures and social activities for the club in 2021. It is hoped that there will be another fixture against the School sometime in June 2021 along with at least one other fixture against other local Old Boys sides during the season. Despite the lack of OJCC activity this year, it was very pleasing to see OJs Sam Burge, as match manager, along with his brother Kieran and Simon Barrett featuring for MCC in their match against the School in September at East Molesey C.C. supported by parents and more recent OJ cricketing leavers including Ben Geddes, who has been playing for Surrey and captaining Ashted C.C.'s 1st XI this season around the boundary. There will be more news and updates to follow in due course but please keep in touch via email to Adrian Gale: [abg@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:abg@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk).



## The OJ FC

After closely missing out on a third promotion in three years during the 18/19 season, Old Johnians were back stronger for the 19/20 season after a busy transfer window securing the signings of new and younger OJs. The new additions were enough to bring home the Division 3 title with a couple of games to spare and secure promotion to Division 2 of the Arthurian League. Another fantastic achievement for the club. Well done to all involved! If you are keen to hear more, or you would like to get involved in the OJFC journey, please contact them at: [oldjohnianfc@gmail.com](mailto:oldjohnianfc@gmail.com).

## OJ Golf Club



As you might imagine the impact of Covid 19 has made it a very difficult year for the Golfing Society. It was only on 12 September that we were able to play our first and, as it transpires, only match - against the O Alleynians. We were hopeful of being able to play against the Bar GS, postponed from May and rearranged for 31 October, but the Bar Golf Committee recently ruled that their matches for the remainder of the season should not take place.

I'm starting soon to talk to opposition, about dates and venues for next year. Looking ahead the future with Covid 19 still looks very unclear and does not augur well for golf. We will have to wait and see.

## Archive news

There is a [new twitter thread](#) and blog post [here](#) about the history of the 'Tenner Bell' at St John's, from the School Archives. Do you have any memories of the tenner bell at St John's? If so, the archivist would love to hear them.

## OJ Magazine

The 2020 edition is delayed but we hope to have it ready by the beginning of 2021. In the meantime, if you have any stories or news to share, please email Naia Edwards, [nedwards@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:nedwards@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk).

## Communications preferences

Thank you to everyone who has let us know how you would like to continue to hear from St John's. If you have not yet had a chance to do so, you can fill in the form [here](#).



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