

Summer has arrived and marks the end of a very busy term. There has been much hard work, excitement, laughter and sadness as we once again, waved goodbye to Luckley's leavers, wishing them well for the next stage of their lives. There is comfort in the fact that Luckley leavers will be back as alumni. We are lucky to have a thriving alumni community, with many of you returning to participate in a variety of activities and events. A massive thank you to all of you who have volunteered your time and expertise for the good of Luckley pupils. We could not be more grateful for the mentoring, work experience and careers advice that many of you provide with a charitable heart. As always, do get in touch if you would like to visit Luckley or have news to share. You will always receive a warm reception. Enjoy reading the latest at Luckley.

The Life Changing Work of Samantha Hunt MBE

Meeting Samantha Hunt (née Clarkson) MBE for the first time feels like meeting an old friend. A strong, confident and outgoing personality, Samantha knows how to captivate others in conversation as we walk and talk, reviewing some of the notable changes to her old school. Yet, some areas of Luckley are exactly how Samantha remembers them from years gone by. Proud to be named Head Student in 1986, Samantha was one of few awarded a scholarship, which afforded her a Luckley education. An education that holds fond memories of a fun and friendly community. An education that influenced her life decisions and helped shape her younger character.

Hardworking and driven, Samantha was inspired by her Religious Studies lessons, leaving Luckley a devout Christian. There were the daily prayers in Drake Hall, on hands and knees and the perseverance with the itchy tweed uniform and lunchtime curries. After studying Theology at the University of Birmingham, Samantha continued with her philanthropic work, leading to an MBE in 2020 – proof of her strong Christian values and outstanding citizenship. Certainly, Samantha's actions speak louder than words.

After completing her PGCE at the University of Cambridge, Samantha's first employment was as a Religious Studies teacher, first at Yateley and then at Sandhurst School, where she has held various positions over the past 32 years, including Head of Religious Studies. Today, Samantha is Deputy Headteacher and Head of Safeguarding at Corvus Learning Trust. She is a past winner of the Secondary School Teacher of the Year award, where nominations were made by her students. Samantha is on a mission to positively impact the world, one individual at a time. She talks of her students accompanying her to fulfil charitable work, to the refugee camps in Calais, for example. Samantha explains that it is here where strong friendships are forged, charitable work and fundraising efforts realised. Her aim is to inspire her students to be active "upstanders", rather than passive bystanders – encouraged by witnessing the oppression



Samantha Hunt attending a graduation ceremony, Rwanda

and abuse of fellow human beings. Samantha's motto is "be the change that you want to see in the world."

Samantha has long been fascinated with the prevention of genocide – leading her to charitable work in Bosnia, Poland, Germany and Rwanda. Educating young people and teachers in training about the Holocaust, Samantha is a trained guide for Auschwitz Birkenau, Poland and Bergen Belsen, Germany, as well as a Holocaust Educational Trust volunteer and 2003 winner of the Anne Frank Inspirational Teacher of the Year award. She is also an academic advisor for Remembering Srebrenica – paying tribute to the victims of genocide in Bosnia, where close to 100,000 civilians were killed, over 2 million people forcibly displaced, and between 20,000 – 50,000 women systematically raped. All due to their ethnic and religious identity.

While speaking at an event for former Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, a chance meeting with a Rwandan refugee inspired Samantha to travel to Rwanda in 2006 and meet survivors of the genocide against the Tutsi. This first visit

The Life Changing Work of Samantha Hunt MBE continued...

had a profound effect. Samantha describes two survivors she met there, how their horrific individual circumstances haunted her dreams and how she was compelled to actively help. As a woman who rarely stands still, Samantha provided modest financial support to the broken individuals she befriended on her first visit. Returning two years later, she witnessed two individuals rebuilding their lives, with hope and enthusiasm. This was to mark the beginning of a lifelong ambition to positively impact as many Rwandan survivors as possible; most without education and living on the streets.



Since 2008, with the support of the Survivors Fund (SURF), which Samantha chairs, her 'Reaching Rwanda' initiative has raised close to £300,000; funding the build of two villages for Rwandan genocide survivors, financing more than 40 local businesses and employing 120 survivors, paying for two water pumps to provide 3,000 people with drinking water and livestock to help feed 50 orphan-headed households. Samantha opened and runs a free education centre for vulnerable children and orphans called Philly's Place, and is close to completion on a much bigger centre that will provide a free education for over 1,000 children. Philly's Place was inspired by Samantha's much-loved black British grandmother, Phillis, who was the recipient of extreme prejudice after moving away from London following WWII.



As well as two national teaching awards and her MBE, Samantha has been recognised as a Sue Ryder 'Woman of Achievement', a 'Pride of Bracknell' and has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the University of Winchester. At Luckley we often talk about pupils discovering their gifts and talents to go on to live meaningful and fulfilling lives. Yet it is by giving these talents away for the service of others that provides purpose and a life well lived.



ALUMNI NEWS

Miss Valerie Pornicott's Memorial Ceremony

Luckley alumni and senior leaders gathered for a brief ceremony to remember former French teacher, Head of Languages, and Housemistress, Miss Valerie Pornicott. Donations raised from her funeral in January have funded a tree and a plaque in Miss Pornicott's name, together with a rose bowl to award outstanding achievement in A Level French. It was a joyous meeting of friends and colleagues to commend Miss Pornicott for her love and service to Luckley as well as a time to reflect on a life well lived. The sun was shining, the sky bright blue and guests were invited to tea and cake to complete an uplifting afternoon.



The Ash tree purchased and planted in memory of Miss Valerie Pornicott, several months after it was planted.

Alumni Versus Pupil Netball Re-match



(back row, left – right) Sophie Smith (2022), Jorja Chillery (2023), Eve Doodson (2022), Lucy Bye (2023), Camilla Potter (2011), Jessica Heppner (2017), Ella B, Grace W, Millie B, Evie R, Libby L, Amelia S, Anna D, Sophie S
(front row, left – right) Octavia P, Sophie R, Amy K

Current pupils once again took on an alumni team, as happened in March last year. This year it was Luckley that walked away with a clear win; a strong team of year 10, 12 and 13 girls. Well done team Luckley! Alumni and current pupils enjoyed some friendly competition and were given the opportunity to strike up conversation over drinks and nibbles after the game. Luckley's alumni team was made up of a range of graduating year groups; the class of 2009 and 2011 through to more recent leavers from 2017, 2021 and 2022. Thanks goes to Mrs Kirstie Hobson for getting the current Luckley team in place, to Mrs Lisa Cox for umpiring and to all our participants for being such great sports. Spectators included puppies, children, parents, alumni and pupils; so there was a lot of action both on and off the court!

ALUMNI NEWS

Running For a Good Cause – Rachel Stevens

Alumna, Rachel Stevens from the class of 2018, emailed in to say she successfully completed London's 26 mile marathon in April. It was a challenge she has dreamt about achieving and a charitable run for Rachel, with the £4,000 she raised going to St Catherine's Hospice – providing the best possible care and quality of life to those with life limiting illnesses. As a Paramedic, this charitable cause is one she feels passionate about. Well done Rachel.

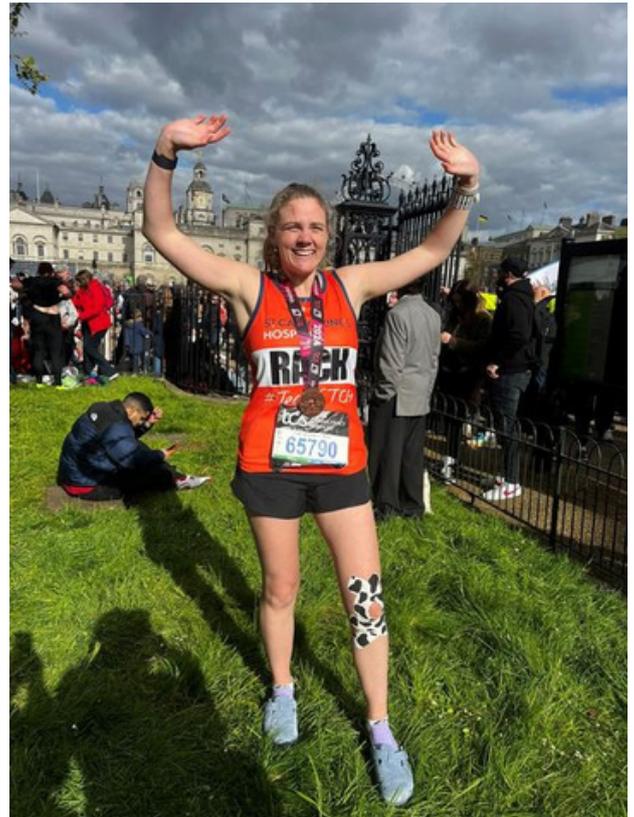
Great Minds Unite



Photographed are some of Luckley's honorary alumni who dedicated a career to teaching others. The group, members of the Luckley-Oakfield School Retirement Fellowship, still remain in touch, enjoying coffee mornings and lunch gatherings. Above, lunch hosted by Ann Jeater; now in her 90s. It was Ann who documented Luckley's history into a booklet called Pot-Pourri. We are lucky to have such a caring, and close-knit community who return to school from time-to-time. (back row) Pam Creech (Business), Vera Routledge (Head of Sixth Form/ Languages), Anna Morris (French), Margaret Kempton (English) (middle row) Ann Williams (French and Spanish), Ann Jeater (Head of Science), Beryl Remington (School Secretary/ Registrar), Chris Gadsby (Head of Chemistry), Kathy Osbaldeston (Head of Maths) (front row) Jean Warwick (Librarian)

An Outstanding Citizen – Isobel Buck

It was almost two years ago that we waved goodbye at the Luckley gates to alumna and former Deputy Head Student, Isobel Buck, class of 2022. While at Luckley, Isobel was an exemplary Luckley citizen who greeted everyone with open arms and a beaming smile. Not much has changed. Now in her second year at University of Southampton studying BA Modern Languages and Linguistics, she has received the Residence Life Star Award. She is one of just six nationwide recipients to win the award, which honours the exceptional dedication to enhancing life in the university halls of residence – supporting and bringing the community together. Isobel, we could not be more proud and delighted to see your beaming smile again.



Rachel Stevens following her successful 26 mile run.



ALUMNI NEWS

Searching for Faith Buchanan

Parent, Laura Buckingham, came in with her half sister, Naomi, in search of Naomi's mother, a Luckley alumna. Laura had no idea that her sister's mother had attended Luckley, registered at Luckley from 1944 – 1946. During this time she was friends with Rosalie Lloyd Jones, who was Head Girl and who went on to be a doctor; one of two female medical students in the 1950s that trained at Guys Hospital, London. Rosalie is the oldest living Head Student according to the records.

Incidentally, after visiting Luckley, Naomi went to Switzerland to house sit for her step brother, who lives in Lausanne. While she was there, she went to investigate the finishing school that Faith went to after Luckley. She found the address where Faith lodged, met the family who owned the house, and learned it had been in the family for generations – meeting someone who remembers Faith.

If you have information about Faith Buchanan from years gone by and are willing to share, please get in touch.



1946 Luckley tennis team (left – right) Anne Lovett, Faith Buchanan, Jane Cundell, Anne Thompson, Yvonne Davis (captain sitting in chair), Diana Lewis



Jade Savage (left) with friends celebrating a friend's wedding

Jade Savage: Reaching New Heights

At the beginning of July Jade was contacted by her former university, University of South Wales, with an offer to return to start a master's in Professional Practice. She applied for and has received full funding for her master's, which starts in September. Last year Jade achieved a 1st Class Honours for her Learning Disability Nursing degree; receiving an award of excellence for the highest achieving student within her cohort. She was also highly commended for her outstanding work during her work placements. Jade's continued studies will fit around her NHS position where she works as a Registered Learning Disability Nurse. Yet another alumna making her mark on the world and within the community. Well done to Jade.



LUCKLEY ALUMNI INTERVIEW

Life in the City

Kamran Khan (class of 2023) joined Luckley's Sixth Form as a scholar and made his mark early on. Planned, highly organised and always happy to help, Kam's 'superhero' campaign for Head Student earned him the position – a challenge he was happy to own. At Luckley, Kam's positive and ambitious character was admired by all; many looking up to him for advice and support.

Kam aimed high when he applied for a degree apprenticeship at the prestigious, JP Morgan, his biggest achievement to-date. It was a gruelling and nerve-racking process, with a large candidate pool. He recalls group and one-to-one interviews and assessments, which he completed with determination and a winning attitude.

Now in his first year with JP Morgan, Kam remarks that his degree apprenticeship is providing a blend of academic learning and practical work experience – offering a fully paid Finance degree, a salary, and industry experience. And while it requires sacrifice (as he does not have the free time his university friends enjoy) his role as a Trading Assistant means he is working with highly skilled and knowledgeable employees who treat him like a colleague.

True to character, Kam has fully immersed himself in working life; known by colleagues for his confidence carrying out his remit and dealing with senior traders. Mondays are reserved for his Finance studies; a remote programme with University of Exeter. Kam juggles his responsibilities well and tells me of an upcoming company charity run he is currently training for, alongside other colleagues. Early morning runs are on the agenda.

It is not all work and no play for Kam. He sets aside Saturday mornings for cricket, playing alongside other Luckley alumni. A loyal friend, he finds time to visit his old pals at their university halls of residence as well as attend evening socials. Kam relishes the opportunity to travel and we spoke briefly about a recent holiday to Tenerife – providing time to unwind amongst friends.

Upkeeping tradition, Luckley's Head Students visit Bertha Drake's grave on Luckley's 104th birthday, Katie Foster and Kam Khan



Kam with his five Luckley awards received in Year 13

Remembering Luckley, he recounts fond memories; the black-tie dinner, trip to Edinburgh, 'Under the Lights' sports fixtures and his Mathematics teacher, Mr David Hall. Back then, the juggle of getting top grades, fulfilling his Head Student duties and applying for universities seemed a heavy workload. As Kam continues to raise the bar for himself, he feels he is busier and more challenged than ever before. Aiming for a First in his Financial Degree Apprenticeship, he is comfortable with being busy and thrives under pressure.

With a big heart, Kam is keen to give back to Luckley, returning to speak to students about his degree apprenticeship and providing advice to those considering something similar. Kam's fearless, focused and can-do attitude continues to provide a winning formula which for now, is giving him a taste of working life in the city.



ALUMNI MEMORIES

Sue Bailey (née Pike), Luckley Pupil 1972 – 1974



Sue Bailey was schooled at Luckley-Oakfield from 1972 to 1974. In this short time she built lasting memories of Luckley and of life in England, being Canadian and from a military family. She flew back to visit England with her husband, John, in June 2019 to join in Luckley's Centenary celebrations. From the memories of Sue Bailey, she shares recollections of Luckley below.

"I do not remember my English teacher and yet I remember studying Shakespeare and taking a school trip to a Roman amphitheatre to watch a play, possibly Twelfth Night. I think of this often as we have retired to Stratford, Ontario, which has been a renowned theatre town since 1954. This year, in preparation to see Richard III, I read the play first, using techniques to understand it I must have learned at Luckley. We thoroughly enjoyed the production.

We read 'Time and the Conways' by J.B. Priestley in English and throughout my life I have referred to and made use of one of its quotes, "Life is made of joy and woe, when this we rightly know, safely through the world we'll go". The book remains treasured on my bookshelf, almost 50 years later. I see I have the quote slightly wrong (it should be "Man was made for joy and woe..."). I like my version better!"

The Summer of 1996

Veronica Murphy (née Fletcher) kindly emailed a photograph of her Luckley Summer Term, 1996. Veronica and her classmates were celebrating the completion of their GCSEs – hence the happy faces. A big thank you to Veronica for sharing her memories. I am sure we can all relate to this very special and important moment in time. Veronica is pictured in the front row, far left. If you know the names of the other pupils featured below, please do get in touch.



ALUMNI NEWS



Speech Day

Friday, 5 July marked the last day of term. In keeping with tradition, Speech Day's guest speaker was an alumna, and this year we had the great pleasure to welcome Dr Emma King. Her honest and profound talk to Luckley's Year 11 and Year 13 students and their parents was extremely well received. A top student and someone who has achieved so much in life, she explained that the glossy profile that summarises her life achievements is not the reality of her journey to where she is today; UK Space Agency. Emma painted a realistic picture of her career journey and asked students to embrace failure, move forward with resilience and seize unplanned opportunities. To expect the unexpected is to keep life interesting. Photographed is Emma (left) with Headmistress Mrs Areti Bizior. Two very extraordinary women who unite as Luckley past and present.

Exchanging Generosity and Creativity

The lovely Mya de Souza, who left Luckley at the end of 2023, is something of an entrepreneur with fantastic creative flair. While studying at Luckley, Mya had her own lucrative business making beautiful bespoke dog collars – Lush Pup London. Although she no longer runs the business, she was only too happy to handcraft a beautiful brown collar with Swarovski crystals for Widg; one of Lisa Hutchins' Weimaraner's. It was made specially as a gift for alumna Lisa, who continues to support Luckley and its students. Photographed is Widg sporting two collars; the brown studded version being his new Lush Pup collar. Thanks goes out to both Lisa and to Mya for their kindness and generosity of spirit.



Widg wearing his new brown-studded collar

ALUMNI NEWS



Fly-by Visit from Daniela Karmazin (1996 – 1997)

During the Summer Half Term break, alumna Daniela Methe (née Karmazin) popped in with her husband and two boys, while staying with her Luckley guardian for a few days. Daniela spent just one year at Luckley, coming from Germany, and has very fond memories of life as a boarder and of a foreign student at Luckley. She would have liked to have stayed on here for Upper Sixth as she recalls how much she learned and progressed here. She also built great friendships with her peers as well as with the other boarders (left) and recalls her role in Luckley's fashion show (below).



Carolyn Russell (née Dicker)

Carolyn Russell returns (1961 – 1970)

In July we enjoyed a brief visit from Mrs Carolyn Russell (née Dicker), who was at Luckley 1961 – 1970. Carolyn was just eight when she came to board at Luckley. So much had changed; the woods, the old outbuildings disappeared, the swimming pool replaced with the theatre and the new buildings; Coggan House, Jubilee and the Simon Richmond Music Centre. She came with one of her daughters, Henrietta, who was taught by Luckley's Headmistress, Mrs Areti Bizior, years ago at St George's School – Henrietta's favourite teacher! An interesting coincidence indeed.

LUCKLEY HIGHLIGHTS

ISA Essay Writing Competition

In February, the English Department invited students across the school to enter an ISA essay writing competition, with various categories of entry for each year group. We had some fantastic responses and were delighted to learn that Ella D and Tabby W in Year 12 were awarded 1st and 2nd place respectively in the English Literature category for their analytical essays on the Shakespeare tragedy, 'Othello'. This is an amazing achievement and a testament to their outstanding work and skills of analysis.



(left – right) Tabby W, Ella D

ISA Shakespeare Monologue Competition

Luckley Year 12 student, James B, was announced the overall KS4/5 competition winner at the ISA Shakespeare Monologue Competition. His first place position was achieved against strong competition and more than 290 entries. Adjudicator, Professor Charlotte Scott said, "First Place goes to James B of Luckley House School. A brilliant Richard II; introspective, entitled, emotive and authoritarian. A wonderful range of emotions and attitudes as well as beautifully spoken." The ISA invited James to visit Mary Arden's house and farm in Stratford-upon-Avon following his win. He was also privileged to attend a workshop, provided by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, with the opportunity to perform the monologue during the winners' event. It is a fantastic achievement by James, who gave much thanks to his LAMDA teacher, Amber, who accompanied him to the winners' event.



James B pictured at Mary Arden's house



The Cowshed Charity Challenge

The whole school came together over a week to collect much needed clothing and accessories in support of locally based charity, 'The Cowshed'. The charitable drive formed part of this year's FUN TIME (Fostering Unity, Nurturing, Time In Meaningful Enrichment), where all year groups join hands for fun and good causes. 'The Cowshed' provides quality cleaned and ironed second hand clothing and other essentials free of charge to anyone in need.

LUCKLEY HIGHLIGHTS

Luckley's Musical Finale



The Junior Choir in Birmingham, outside the competition venue accompanied by Mrs Ellwood, Director of Music

Congratulations to the Junior Choir who gained a place in the Music for Youth national finals, travelling to Birmingham in July to perform in the final competition. The choir sang brilliantly in the town hall venue and received positive feedback. We await to hear the result of Luckley's performance and hope to be invited to the Youth Proms. This is a fabulous achievement by Luckley pupils and reflective of the excellent work that Mrs Ellwood and her team continue to put in to prepare pupils for competition. Luckley's musical talent continues to flourish as the Music department expands year-on-year.



Brussels Cathedral, final Luckley performance on tour

Also in July, Luckley's Junior and Senior Choirs toured Belgium with great success – receiving a standing ovation at each performance. The tour finished with a grandiose performance at Brussels Cathedral. Luckley's pupils enjoyed a wonderful experience singing and touring together. For some, it was their final days at Luckley before moving on to further education.



Keeping the Luckley Spirit Alive



1936 (left – right) Miss Bertha Drake (Headmistress), Miss Elizabeth Drake (Art Teacher), Miss Catherine Drake (Junior School Head)

Luckley's founder and Headmistress, Miss Bertha Drake had a vision for Luckley; a broad Christian education for girls both near and far, where opportunity was aplenty and pupils were exposed to a great number of academic subjects and extra curricular activities. This freedom of choice was not well practiced at the time but Miss Drake believed a broad education would best serve her pupils – supporting the discovery of their unique gifts and developing these to serve their respective communities.

Miss Drake led the school with complete dedication and strong Christian principles from 1918 until her death in 1959. The character of Miss Drake was such that nearly all the girls conformed and worked to the best of their ability. In the later years, Mrs Galloway held the role of acting Headmistress when Miss Drake became too ill to be a constant presence.

Luckley girls developed as individuals – there was no typical "Luckley girl" and each went on to pursue a wide range of occupations, lifestyles and self-interests. Some continued to further education, others became carers, debutantes and departed to foreign lands. As early as the 1940s, there was news of an 'old girl' completing her Oxford University studies and starting as a doctor at a London Hospital. After the war and by 1944, pupils past and present were being exhorted to win the peace; to provide leadership, courage, faith and uphold the principles of the School.

Gifting Luckley in Your Will

Looking back at archived photographs of Luckley, and the many pupils that have passed through its gates since 1918, there remains many similarities. The main house has been lovingly preserved, as have the grounds, which are often the topic of conversation with visitors. Pupils enjoy a close-knit community where each can experience a breadth of subjects and enrichment activities within an aspirational environment. For a small school, Luckley's facilities are truly outstanding – providing pupils with the room and infrastructure to explore and grow their talents. Without such modifications, the School would not have continued to flourish and grow.

Much of Luckley's development has been made possible by the extraordinary generosity of its benefactors together with the sale of school grounds. The introduction of formal legacy giving was introduced several years ago and we have been fortunate to receive financial gifts from three alumni to-date. Our hope is that legacy giving will play a part in supporting Luckley's future plans and allow this wonderful community to continue its mission years into the future. Find out more about Luckley Society 1918 by clicking [here](#) where Luckley introduces legacy giving, providing an opportunity to those that may wish to give back to the School in their will.



1946 Luckley School during winter

IN MEMORY OF...

Pam Hobbs, 1944 – April 2024

Pam Hobbs, who later remarried and became Pam Commins Gregg, was Head of English 1981 – 1995. Her husband, Richard, contacted one of Pam's former Luckley colleagues and friends to say that Pam had sadly died in hospital after medical problems. Pam's daughter, Debbie Hobbs, was a Luckley pupil from Year 9 to the end of Year 11, before going on to Ranelagh School for Sixth Form.



1982 Luckley-Oakfield School teachers, middle row, far left is Pam Hobbs

Judy Norman, 30 November 1929 – 28 April 2024

In May Luckley received the sad news that Judy had passed away at the end of April, following a fall at Murdoch House Care Home a few days earlier. Judy, whose given name was Jean (although no one knows why she never went by that name) was Senior Laboratory Technician in the Science Department for many years and known by colleagues for her lovely sense of humour, which stayed with her to the end. Judy's funeral that took place on 21 May at Easthampstead Park Crematorium was a loving affair.

Her four children, grandchildren and great grandchildren all paid their respects to Judy. As did some of her former colleagues and friends from Luckley. Judy made the beautiful curtains for the former library as well as the staff room and many of her colleagues were gifted with hollyhocks and raspberry plants from her garden. She always made those around her smile.

Judy chose her own farewell poem, which has been shared below.

Farewell

Those who live no more, whom we loved,

Echo still within our thoughts, our words, our hearts.

And what they did and who they were

Becomes a part of all that we are, forever.

