



THE OLD BORLASIAN NEWSLETTER

Summer 2024

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Message from Headteacher

This has been a momentous year for the school as we have moved into the 400th year since it was founded by Sir William Borlase in 1624. I hope that many of you have been able to join us for the incredible celebrations of this event, notably the Exhibition and Open Day and the Birthday Bash music festival which have celebrated the very best of the school's long history and its current strengths. Through these events it has been a pleasure to meet many Old Borlasians, some recent leavers and others who attended the school as far back as the 1940s and some from as far away as Canada and Australia. Borlase been notably remarked on by Ofsted who inspected the school in May and found us to be "Outstanding" in all areas - their final report is available here and via the school and Ofsted websites - but they commented on our "positive and joyful ethos" and also that "parents, staff and pupils appreciate the school's traditions, ethos and inclusivity." Te digna sequere rings loud and strong!



Message from our President

On 28 June 1603, William Borlase was knighted by King James I, who had acceded to the English throne earlier that year upon the death of Queen Elizabeth I on 24 March. Sir William's investiture took place at Sir John Fortescue's house at Beddington in Surrey. In 1624, Sir William founded a school in Marlow in memory of his second son, Henry, who had died at a relatively young age. This year, we celebrate 400 years since the School's foundation and give thanks for our Founder. The Old Borlasian Club presented the School with flagpole to commemorate this milestone in its history. You can read more about that in the article below.

On Friday 28 June 2024, which the School celebrated as Founder's Day, the Old Borlasian Cricket match was played. The Old Borlasian team were victorious over the School's 1st XI, avenging their defeat in 2023. Mr Goodall presented the School side with special commemorative caps, emblazoned with the School's 400 coat of arms, in recognition of the anniversary. My thanks to Julien Bussell for organising the match, a full report of which is included in this newsletter.



Dr Gregory Lim (OB 1997–2003) with his sister, Dr Chloe Powell (OB 2000–2007)

The following day, Saturday 29 June, the School held an Exhibition Open Day followed by a 400th anniversary Dinner and Ball. It was a wonderful day of celebration, with approximately 1,000 visitors enjoying displays of historical memorabilia; musical, drama and dance performances; 400th anniversary-inspired cakes; computer rendering of the evolution of the School buildings over four centuries; hockey matches and much, much more. The evening guests gathered on the Cloister lawns for a drinks reception, before sitting down to dinner in the transformed Sports Hall. I was somewhat overwhelmed by the number of former and current long-serving members of staff who were in attendance, including four Headteachers, past and present! It is a testament to the School that so many people wanted to attend the celebrations. Thanks and congratulations to everyone involved with making the day happen, and especially Kay Mountfield, Ilona Cains and Ray Kipping.



Happy 400th Birthday, Borlase!

*Dr Gregory Lim
President, Old Borlasian Club*





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Happy 400th Birthday Borlase!

The school is enormously proud of its long history in Marlow and of its role in delivering the very best education to local children for over four centuries. This year, 2024, has therefore been a wonderful opportunity to come together as a whole Borlase community to celebrate. The current school community of students, staff, parents and governors have celebrated and we have been absolutely delighted to reconnect with so many Old Borlasians from across the decades. Over the academic year (and 2024 so far!) the school has hosted a whole range of events where our 400 year history and our vision for the next 400 years has been our theme.

This has included:

- Publishing a new history book - Borlase, The First 400 Years;
- The Senior Musical, Jazz Night and Concerts celebrated the history of Performing Arts
- In Dance, an original piece was choreographed
- Science students presented their vision of The Next 400 Years
- Our Masterclasses and Global Citizenship Conference included an array of outstanding speakers associated with the school as our students focused on the future.



Borlase Founders Day - Friday 28 June

The year's programme culminated in the celebrations on Founders Day, Friday June 28th, the anniversary of Sir William Borlase receiving his knighthood and the Saturday following this. Many Borlasians cleared the date over a year in advance to fly from around the world to join us - Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, USA, Dubai and around Europe to be part of the celebrations.

At 9.00 a.m. on Friday, the whole school set off on a sponsored walk from the school, through the woods and hills around Marlow and ending at Marlow Sports Centre. This was organised by Mr Goodall himself to bring the students together in raising money for a local Mental Health charity. As the walkers returned, they were greeted by our local MP, Joy Morrissey who joined the school by cutting the enormous Birthday Cake donated by Burgers Bakery of Marlow.





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Borlase 400 History Exhibition & Open Day - Saturday 29 June

The school put on a unique and extraordinary History Exhibition and Open Day. For the first time, Borlase opened its doors to members of the public to come in and see the school buildings, including the historic original schoolhouse and view displays and exhibits all about its past, present and its future.

The event was opened by Countess Lady Howe, Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire and Mr Goodall was joined by the Mayor, Cllr David Brown and Buckinghamshire Cllr Mimi Harker OBE, Barbara Robson (daughter of Stuart Lever OB 1944), Ted Brown (Chair of the Trustees) and Petri Anderson (Master Stained Glass designer). Lady Howe opened the new Centenary Hall with its 400 Year Commemorative stained glass windows, donated by Stuart Lever's legacy and the SWBGS Trustees. Greg Lim, President of the Old Borlasians presented a new flagpole and flag to mark the occasion. Borlase 400 & Alumni Captains Isabella Graham and Sumat Parmar and School Captains Mattie Gillespie and India Harris led the guests around the exhibition.

In the exhibition, detailed historical research included the Borlase family from its origins in Cornwall and movement to Buckinghamshire compiled by Jane Bungey, former Head of Sixth Form who hails from Cornwall. Miss Mountfield (Deputy and Headteacher 2005-2023) Greg Lim (OB 2003) and Ilona Cains (Director of Development) created displays from the founding stone to the pandemic and the Sports Hall of the current day. A very impressive centrepiece - the history timeline - was created by Mr Mead's Year 12 400 History Team, in particular, Izzy Graham and Zara Yates (Prefects and History Y12 students). The artwork for all these displays were designed and created by Leyla Vedadipour.



Over 100 students were guides for the exhibition, having read the information about the historic buildings, they were able to talk to guests about the origins of the buildings and how they were developed over the years.

At the Exhibition, the school was delighted to launch a range of memorabilia to mark the special occasion. China mugs, Borlase funky socks, pins, tote bags, scarves, the history book and a unique Borlase 400 Beer, created by Rebellion Beer were all in great demand (the Borlase 400 beer is now sold out!) The Beer recipe was made with hints of ingredients that feature in Lady Borlase's cookery book of 17th century recipes.

A whole school community baking competition was launched and amazing cakes and biscuits were baked and submitted for judging from students, staff and parents. These were judged on the Friday night and then sold on the day of the exhibition. The raspberry cake featured above was made by Alex Ley (Y12) and who also made over 200 cakes for general sale!





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Live performances and activities

Current staff and students organised a set of live and interactive performances for people to enjoy across the day. This included Hockey matches on the new astroturf, Y7 STEM projects and a fantastic video created by Harry Elliott (OB 2017) showing the development of the school buildings over the past 400 years. As ever, the Performing Arts were a key part to this day and were delighted to have the opportunity to present dance, drama and music performances to the hundreds of people who came along.



Throughout the day, there were hockey matches played on the new school astro to recognise the role of sport over the years. Hawkinsport created replicas of the first Borlase Hockey shirt from 1972, which were worn by one of the teams on the day. The other team wore the current Adidas shirts as three competitive matches were played throughout the afternoon.

400th anniversary flagpole

To commemorate the 400th anniversary of the foundation of the School, the Old Borlasian Club has presented the School with a flagpole, which has been erected on the south side of the newly renovated Centenary Hall, between the two stained-glass windows. The flagpole was purchased using the remainder of the legacy given by Stuart Lever (OB 1939–1944), most of which funded the creation of the Lever Room in the Cloisters. The flagpole was unveiled on 29 June 2024.

A flagpole previously existed at the School, presented by Mrs Hornby Lewis in 1928. Her husband was a Governor of the School and both were great benefactors. The commemorative plaque from this flagpole is now displayed in the Stuart Lever Room, and the following was recorded in The Borlasian magazine of 1928 in the report of Speech Day:

“The proceedings, which were held in the open air in glorious sunshine, were opened by the breaking of the new school flag by Mrs. Hornby Lewis, the donor. As the flag unfurled, the whole school gave three hearty cheers.”

The location of the previous flagpole and the design of the flag are unknown. If any older Borlasians know, do get in contact!





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The Celebration Dinner and Ball – Saturday 29 June

The Celebration dinner was a spectacular event and a wonderful occasion where over 320 guests comprising Old Borlasians from across the decades, staff and former staff, governors and former governors came together to celebrate the spirit of Te Digna Sequere.

Guests were treated to an opportunity to see the exhibition and the play - The Reduced Borlase History! Canapes and drinks were served on Cloisters lawn on a lovely, balmy summer evening while the Class of 2022 Jazz trio played.

The Sportshall was converted into a stunning marquee lined with lights and bunting. Impressive table centres designed by Miss Cains, Mrs Challis and Mr Bigsby picked out the theme with gold 400s and school ties. The evening opened with the Borlase Jazz Band followed by the singing of the newly harmonised school song, led by Cantorum singers. The waiting staff supporting SOJO Kitchens of Marlow (Victoria Wellington OB 2002) were all volunteers from the school, organised by Isabella Graham.

Jenny Chislett (Performing Arts Technician) had created a rolling film of photos and video imagery from the decades and a line-up of speakers from across the decades shared their memories of Borlase and how the school has shaped them. The speakers included:

Greg Lim (2003), Chris Smyth (1960); Pete Cape (1979); Phillip Lee (1989); Chris Bradford (1992); Alex Jamieson (2006); Beth Potter (2014); Georgia Tuke (2020); Paul Hawkins OBE (1992); Peter Heywood (Teacher 1984-2019) and the headteacher, Mr Ed Goodall (2023-) and current students.

The founders and directors of Rebellion Brewery, Mark Gloyens, Tim Coombes, Andy Coombes and Paul Gloyens all Old Borlasians from the 1980's, invited guests to sample the Borlase beer which they had donated to support school fundraising and our mental health charities.

The fabulous function band, the Flo Collective, included current Music teacher, Simon Davie and his son, Ollie Davie (OB 2016). They had everyone up and dancing and their performance was followed by the ebullient DJ (KISS, HITS) Jordan Lee Pirrie (OB 2012) who led the late slot of dancing till well after 1.00 a.m.





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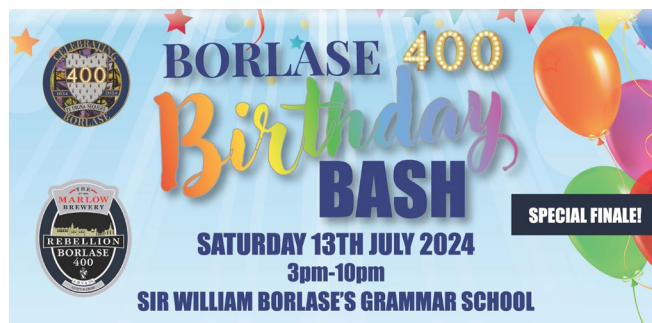
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400th Birthday Bash

After the elegance of the 400th Anniversary Ball, the 400th Birthday Bash was a lively and energetic event, aimed at families with students currently at Borlase, alumni and members of the Marlow community. With warm, dry weather and a setlist of incredibly talented musicians, there was a real buzz of energy and enthusiasm bringing a great festival atmosphere to the school.

The party began at 3pm and people arrived from the outset, greeted by a stirring performance from the Borlase Jazz Band and an impressive selection of classic cars. Given the range of activities from karaoke to croquet, origami to laser quest and the eclectic line-up of professional level performances, guests were keen to stay right until 10pm. Luckily there were plenty of food and drink options to keep everyone fuelled throughout the day, with fish and chips, delicious curries and excellent paella all thoroughly enjoyed and followed up by an exciting array of ice cream choices.

The most frequented venues seemed to be the bar, where stocks of the Borlase 400 beer completely ran out by the end of the evening and the Ferris Wheel, affording majestic views of the school and surrounding area. The OBC had a stand at the event, raising our profile with both the current students and those alumni members who had not yet heard of us. Many were surprised that they had not been told of the club when they had left the school, so our more recent one-year membership scheme for Year 13 leavers is certainly a step in the right direction.



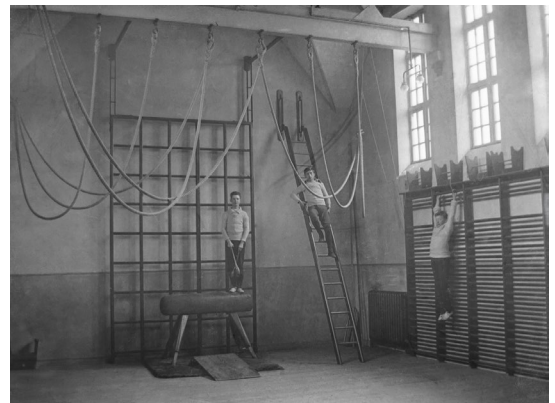
Trip Down Memory Lane

Around 1910 a plan was put in place to complete the North side of The Cloisters with classrooms and a new gymnasium. The Swedish reference stems from the installation of wooden stall bars fixed to walls. In the 1800s stall bars, now more commonly known as gymnastic wall bars, were first created in Sweden by Per Henrik Ling.

An original founder of the Swedish Royal Gymnastic Central Institute, Ling was a true pioneer of gymnastics and physiotherapy. Having suffered badly from arthritis Ling realised the therapeutic potential of wall bars exercise.

As Borlase's school numbers grew there was more demand for classroom spaces and the school hall took over as the new gymnasium in the 1950s.

To this day the Swedish gymnasium room, formerly C5/C6, retains a lot of its old characteristics with the steel girders still in view for gym ropes to be securely fixed: -





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Where are they now? – Nina Hartstone (OB 1987–1989)

Nina Hartstone (OB 1987–1989) was among the first intake of girls to Borlase in the Lower Sixth and studied History, German and Art. She recalls her time at School and describes her career in sound editing.

I remember my mind being opened by lively political debates in History with Mr Shannon, which gave me a lifelong interest in politics and activism. Jazz musician and Art teacher Mr Hamer set me on my creative path, instilling a love for Renaissance art and developing my appreciation for all forms of music. My time at Borlase filled my head with possibilities!

After completing an Arts degree at Kent University, I grasped every opportunity to work in film, hungry to get my foot in the door. My first job in sound was at Pinewood Studios, making tea and learning about post-production. Over the years, I worked my way up through the ranks of sound editorial, reaching the pinnacle of my career in 2019 when I was awarded both an Academy Award (Oscar) and a BAFTA for my work on the film *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Back in the Sixth Form at Borlase, I could never have imagined that my career would reach such heights, and it is a testament to the power of sparking imagination at a young age. Thank you, Borlase — here’s to the next 400 years!



Nina Hartstone won an Academy Award with John Warhurst in 2019

Poetry Corner

PHOENIX

The beauty burst from ash and flame,
Erupting from its past.
Through fire and light the phoenix rose,
Re-born again at last.

Its scarlet feathers, soft and proud,
Its pinion, plume and crest.
Hovered. Hovered above billowing smoke,
For the flickering flames to rest.

The bird it soared through wind and rain,
Past streams and fertile soil.
So blithe, so free. Like a fiery comet,
Whilst in the sun, men toiled.

It lifts your heart to see it fly,
The burning bird in flight.
Its keen eyes glistened like two black gems,
As the phoenix swooped through light.

"Gentle phoenix, wings unfurled,
Your beauty caught my eye."
But phoenix was now nothing but,
A flame against the sky.

Sparks then licked its crimson tail,
Engulfing all its form.
The flames died down. The embers glowed.
The phoenix was re-born.

Daisy Foley (Year 7)
Finalist in Year 7 poetry festival.

CHAT

Our sacred matters, in their plight,
To fill our heads with sheer delight
Have, all but few, decided that
It's always such a sin to chat!

They revel in their own sweet words
Which tend to make us think of birds
And all distractions we can find
To rest and soothe the heavy mind.

What's wrong with chat? It can't be bad,
For without chat we'd all go mad!
And how could we communicate
Or understand or concentrate!

So please, linguistic masters, think
Before you make us write in ink,
Our chat, which you think so unkind
Relieves the tensions of the mind.

It's just like French and German, so
The more you speak the more you know,
If then you care to disagree
Please do explain specifically
Why every time we start to chat
It's fifty lines or stop, take that!

M. C. Stamford. Vb Y

"Phoenix" is from 2017 and "Chat" from 1970





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Borlase Golf Day

The school held its annual golf day at Henley Golf Club in June – 84 golfers took part in this ever-popular event with a shotgun start at 8.30am followed by lunch and prize giving.

This year is a particularly special year for Borlase Golf and much of the credit for its past and continued success is attributed to Sally Woolven, who has been such a fantastic supporter of the school. We asked Sally to tell us more about the Borlase Golf Day: -

“I set up the Danesfield School Golf Day in April 1999 as we had 4 children at the school. The money we raised in those days went towards the purchase of new playground equipment for the children there. Local TV presenter Steve Rider (a friend of a parent) played in the first event at Harleyford Golf Club and has played in nearly every Golf Day since then. The event ran for five years until June 2003 when the last Danesfield Golf Day was held and the first Borlase Golf Day started (both events in the same year). By now our four children had moved to Borlase and as funds for hockey at the school were badly needed, it seemed sensible to direct all the fundraising efforts to one school.

The Borlase Golf Day has been held every year since 2003 and there are never less than 20 teams entering and often 24 teams (4 in a team). The event was initially rotated between Harleyfod Golf Club, Temple Golf Club and Henley Golf Club but as the years have gone by it is now held at Henley Golf Club mainly because it is easier for me (my home club) and the club also benefits from hosting the event. A player did get a hole in one the first year the Borlase Golf Day was held at Henley Golf Club but sadly I cannot remember who this was! The event is very well supported by local businesses/parents and friends of Borlase Hockey and teams tend to come back every year. Over the years the average amount raised on the day is £5,000 although for the last 5 years it has averaged over £6,000. Around £120,000 since it started. The money raised goes towards the provision of coaching staff/pitch hire/goal keeping kit/transport costs to help the school compete against the very best private (and state) schools in the country. Borlase has always been one of the best state schools for hockey and has produced many international players over the years. However, the emphasis is on supporting children at all levels of the game so that it can be enjoyed by all pupils at the school irrespective of ability.

Friends of Borlase Hockey is a group that was set up by parents at the school many years ago and is extremely active in raising funds for hockey. Whilst I run the golf side of these events, I couldn't possibly do it without the support of a wonderful group of parents at the school who help with sponsorship/raffles/running of the Gambling Hole on the day. It is very much a team effort and Nathan Monk, Director of Hockey at Borlase has been a wonderful supporter of the day during his 9 years at the school. The linkup between Marlow Sports Club and Borlase is integral to the success of hockey at the school as the students use the hockey pitch at Marlow Sports Club.

I was a School Governor at Borlase for 9 years and after our last child left the school I then became a trustee at Marlow Sports Club for the past 8 years so my link with the school carries on to this day which is why I continue to run the Borlase Golf Day! I am a huge fan of both Borlase and Marlow Sports Club and our children have derived great benefit from both institutions. My husband, Nigel has also coached hockey there over the years.”





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Borlase Cricket Match 2024

The unseasonal weather cleared towards the end of June leaving the annual Borlase 1st v Old Borlasians cricket match to go ahead under bright skies at Marlow Sports Club. In keeping with the school's 400th anniversary celebrations the Borlase 1st team squad were presented with special cricket caps in the old school colours of black and white by Head Teacher, Ed Goodall.



After a last over loss to a talented Borlase 1st team in 2023 the OBs elected to bat on a decent surface determined to try to win the cup back from the school. Messrs Searle and Bussell A. duly opened and both started brightly before Bussell A. spooned to mid on and Searle played on suggesting that the pitch was a bit slow. OBs 17-2. In need of a partnership Bussell H. and Turner, Captaining the side for the first time, repaired some of the damage and pushed the score onto 83 before Bussell H. (19) was yorked by the impressive Barry. A few minutes later Barry had Turner caught behind for a quick firing 41 off 41 balls.

At 86-4 the game was evenly poised but 3 strong batting contributions from Jackson (44), Yeomans (22) and Neal (33 off 23 balls) pushed the Old Borlasians score to 200-8 after the allotted 30 overs – a decent score but Borlase looked confident that they could chase this down.



Borlase 1st team XI

Back Row (L-R): -

- H Coombes,**
- B Proudfoot,**
- S Babes,**
- M Babu,**
- J Barry,**
- S Sparrow**

Front Row (L-R): -

- V Edulakanti,**
- T Pettit,**
- J Hoggan (Capt),**
- S Parmar,**
- A Band**



Old Borlasians XI

Back Row (L-R):-

- O Neal,**
- J Starkey,**
- H Bussell,**
- E Slater,**
- A Searle,**
- A Bussell**

Front Row (L-R): -

- J Brown,**
- C Jackson,**
- J Turner (Capt),**
- H Yeomans,**
- J Bussell**





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Borlase Cricket Match 2024 ...Continued

After a fabulous tea, many thanks to John and Margaret Nixon, the Borlase opening pair of Proudfoot and Babes strode out to the crease and both started extremely well. They raced to 28 with Proudfoot hitting a succession of crisp 4s before he frustratingly holed out to Brown in the deep. The OBs were relieved to see the back of Proudfoot as he cemented the innings for Borlase's win last year.

Babes continued to strike the ball nicely around the ground and kept up with the required run rate. Band received a beauty from Turner to be caught behind by Jackson bringing in the extremely talented Babu, who is already a regular for Amersham CC 1st team. After 2 beautifully timed 4s it was clear that Babu was more than capable of taking the game away from the OBs. But, bad balls can get you out, and so it proved with Babu mistiming a long hop to the busy Brown at deep midwicket. Borlase 45-3. In need of a decent partnership to get back on track Edulakanti edged a good outswinger from Bussell A before the ever reliable Babes and Captain Hoggan pushed the score to 103-4 and still up with the run rate. Then disaster struck, within 2 overs Hoggan had perished for 12 quickly followed by Babes for an excellent 50 off 47 balls. Borlase 103-6!

A quick fightback was needed and the customary Borlase never-say-die spirit came to the fore again with decent cameo knocks from Sparrow including a mammoth six into Pound Lane and Parmar with 14 not out. Borlase ended on 164 all out but it could have been completely different with Parmar and a couple more partnerships at the end.

Another fantastic match between 2 evenly matched sides. Congratulations to the Old Borlasians in wresting back the cup this year.

Huge thanks to Cal Heppner-Logan for arranging the Borlase squad and to Joe Holloran and Tom Bodinetz for umpiring. Roll on 2025!

Old Borlasians XI Player of the Match
J Turner

Borlase 1st team XI Player of the Match
S Babes



Gregory Lim, President of the Old Borlasian Club, presenting the cricket cup to Jack Turner.

