

# The Fairview Chronicle



"Loyal and True to you, dear Convent Home"



**New Year 2023**



**Brentwood Ursuline Alumnae Society  
Committee Members**

**President – Vicky Squirrell  
Honorary Member – Richard Wilkin, Headteacher, BUCHS**

**Committee:**

Chairman: Marian Mann (née Butler – left school 1977)  
(e-mail: [mrимann@Hotmail.com](mailto:mrимann@Hotmail.com))

Vice Chairman and Reunion Administration: Ruth Westrip (née Richards – left school 1973)

Treasurer: Janet Dean (née Thompson) – left school 1969

Secretary: Angela Corless (e-mail: [acorless@buch.s.co.uk](mailto:acorless@buch.s.co.uk))

Chronicle: Valerie Ichikawa (née West) – left school 1959  
Sarah Penfold – left school 2004  
Michaela Langstone (née Cole - left school 2004)

Please address queries regarding membership to [alumnae@buch.s.co.uk](mailto:alumnae@buch.s.co.uk)

**Front Cover:** Fairview, drawn by Sister Bernard (Mother Mary Bernard) taken from the souvenir card for the Old Girls Meeting on 30 May, 1945.

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## Chairman's Letter

A very warm welcome to the 2023 edition of our Fairview Chronicle! Well, the past year of 2022 has certainly been a year of both highs and lows....

Firstly, it was wonderful to welcome so many of our Alumnae to our Annual Reunion in May. How enjoyable it was to have everyone gathered together at the school again after the enforced lockdowns and cancellations of the past two years. It was such a relief to be 'back to normal' and for everyone to meet up with old friends and visit old haunts in our school!

We were delighted too, to celebrate along with the rest of the country the amazing achievement of HM Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee – 70 years of dedicated service to her country.

On the downside however, we were so sad to hear of the passing of Sr Jude (Dr Anne Conway Scott). She made such an impact on the lives of so many of our fellow pupils at the school. Then, in September – the very sad passing of Her Majesty. You can read memories and recollections of both of these wonderful and inspiring women in this edition. Our grateful thanks to all those of you who took the time to contact us with your memories.

I am very much looking forward to our next Reunion on **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May** this year.

Do please let us know if you are able to join us by emailing us on [alumnae@buchs.co.uk](mailto:alumnae@buchs.co.uk)

In addition, could I urge you to remember to inform us if your email details change, so that we can amend our records and you will continue to receive all future mailings.

Please spread the word about the Reunion, and come along with your old friends!

With very best wishes,

**Marian**

**Marian Mann (néé Butler, 1970-77)**

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## Treasurer's Report

The Society has £1298.34, with some costs due soon relating to stationery and postage to send out the 2023 Chronicles to members who have asked to receive it by post.

Thank you to those who, despite being unable to attend the Reunion, generously gave donations.

**Janet Dean (née Thompson)**

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### **We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Reunion**

For catering purposes we need to know how many will be attending the Reunion on Sunday, 21 May, 2023. If you received this Chronicle by post you will also have received a reply sheet, so please fill this in and return it to let us know if you will be attending or not. If you received your Chronicle by e-mail please respond to: [alumnae@buchs.co.uk](mailto:alumnae@buchs.co.uk); Thank you.

**We regret that due to rising costs it is necessary to increase the cost of the teas served at the Reunion to £7.00, payable on arrival at the door.**

The memorabilia stand at the Reunion is always very popular, so if you have photos or other items, please bring them along to add to the display.

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### **Facebook**

A reminder that our Alumnae Society has a thriving Facebook Page – now with over 1,500 Followers.

[www.facebook.com/BrentwoodUrsulineAlumnaeSociety](http://www.facebook.com/BrentwoodUrsulineAlumnaeSociety)

There is also another Facebook page which may interest you entitled “Memories of Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School”.

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## **The Next Annual Reunion is on Sunday, 21 May, 2023**

**Our Speaker will be:**

**Maureen Mullally-Clarke**

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Maureen was born in 1930 and attended the Ursuline as a boarder from 1941-48. She has published her memoirs in two books 'Old Clothes and Porridge' and 'The Rest of It' - which describe her childhood and schooldays in Brentwood, and a fascinating life lived against the backdrop of an eventful twentieth century.

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## **Review of Annual Reunion Sunday, 15 May, 2022**

Following the Chairman's welcome, and introduction of Committee members, retiring committee member, Ann Camp, was presented with a bouquet and thanked for her sterling work on the committee. As is customary, everyone was asked to stand up to indicate the decade in which they left school. The 1930s were represented by one member, Brenda King, and there were two representatives from the 1940s. The following decades were well represented, but it was noted there was no one present who left school after 2010.

The Treasurer gave her report and explained that the Society's bank account had been closed due to the unreasonable level of charges on an account with a balance of only around £1,000. In future cash will be held in the school's safe, and anyone wishing to make a donation should make their cheque payable to the school, or use a standing order form available from the Treasurer. Costs had risen, so the £5 charge for this year's Reunion will not be sufficient to cover costs in future, and the charge will have to be increased next year.

The Chairman explained that at one time there were 11 Committee members, and now there are only 6, and appealed for more people to join the Committee.

Marian Mann and Ruth Westrip planned to attend the 6<sup>th</sup> form leavers assembly to inform them about the Society should they wish to join later on, and distributed a school badge to each student.

Sister Anne and Sister Margaret hoped to attend the Reunion to give an update on the nuns, but were unable to be present this year. The Sisters have moved out of the Grange to purpose-built accommodation in the grounds close to Eastfield Road. The Grange has been purchased by the Sisters of Mercy to use as a care home for their own Sisters.

The speaker, Angela Kilmartin was introduced. Her talk had been scheduled for the previous two years, but unfortunately had to be postponed due to the Covid epidemic. Angela started by reminiscing about her time at school, accompanied by slides, where music played an important part and she appeared in several major school productions. On leaving school she trained at the Lucy Clayton modelling school and her modelling career included modelling couture gowns by top designers. She then obtained a scholarship at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Following her marriage she was plagued for the next few years by cystitis occurring every two or three weeks. She studied the subject intensively and founded the U&I club, appearing on TV and radio, and wrote self-help books and newspaper articles on the subject. She has now been free of the complaint for 40 years.

She then turned her attention to the harmful effects of mercury being used in fillings for teeth and campaigned for this to be stopped and only white fillings used.

Angela joined the Conservative party and was Councillor for Witham and Braintree for eight years, and is at present finishing her term as Mayor, and is also Chairman of Braintree Council.

Following Angela's talk, the School Song was sung, tea was served in the refectory, during which an excellent raffle was drawn, and then everyone was free to wander around the school and catch up with old friends.

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## **Memories of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**

My first glimpse of The Queen was in October 1957 when we Ursuline girls trooped out of school to see Her Majesty pass by to open the new Brentwood Council Offices. I could never have imagined that one day I would actually work for The Queen.

I was employed for seventeen wonderful years in Princess Margaret's office at Kensington Palace, during which time I was presented to Her Majesty on several occasions. After the death of The Princess in 2002, I was very fortunate to be offered a position as secretary to The Queen's Ladies-in-Waiting at Buckingham Palace where I served until my retirement (at the age of seventy!) in 2015. The Ladies-in-Waiting dealt with much of the correspondence sent to Her Majesty and I was privileged to see many wonderful letters from members of the public and to learn how greatly they valued the replies they received. It was particularly moving to see some of the letters sent to The Queen from Ireland after her historic state visit to the Republic in 2011. It was clear that many people, so painfully aware of the troubled history we share, were profoundly moved by this gesture of reconciliation.

I was privileged to meet The Queen on many occasions during my time at the Palace, but always with other people present. However when I retired I had the honour of a short personal audience – just Her Majesty and me. This could have been a nerve-racking experience, but The Queen was well used to putting others at their ease, and it was a relaxed and informal chat, full of kindness and humour. This for me will be the abiding recollection of a wonderful Monarch and a gracious lady.

**Jean Gray**

Although I never did manage to meet Her Majesty, my only close contact with her occurred when I was a WPC in about 1967. I was sent to Leicester Square to a cinema that HM would be attending. We were meant to be on crowd control, and as such always faced the people not the main attraction! Must admit my nosiness won out and I couldn't resist turning away from the crowd to snatch a quick peek; my over-riding impression was "Wow! What a flawless

complexion!" No doubt she was made up but it seemed very light and natural in effect.

Sad she has passed, but time will catch up with us all eventually.

Watching the various funeral travels, brought back some strong childhood memories, particularly of the respect shown when a funeral cortège passed through. Everyone would stop, men would raise their hats; this was regardless of whether the deceased was known or not. Respect was shown, something sadly lacking in today's busy world.

**Aileen Moxon** now in NZ

I was known at school as Jill Watts and left in 1945. I worked on the headquarters staff of the national voluntary youth organisation the Girls Training Corps. For the 10th birthday of the organisation we held a national rally at the Albert Hall, London, to which Princess Elizabeth (as the queen was) was invited to light the candles on the enormous (wooden) birthday cake. There was a draw for members from all ranks to form a guard of honour to escort the Princess and I was one of those selected. the Princess was only eighteen and seemed very shy and nervous but shook hands with several of us. I remember her brilliant sapphire blue eyes and beautiful complexion. A lasting memory.

**Erica Jill Keeley**

My brief moment with our late Queen came when she presented me with the award of MBE in 2003 for my contribution to the social and medical needs of sick children in Mauritius. Her Majesty began our short conversation with her memories of the beauty of the island when she had visited and asked thoughtfully about the role of the Red Cross and my involvement with organising surgery abroad for needy children. She seemed genuinely interested and concerned, and then gently hooked the medal onto the clip with a motherly "There we are."

**Valerie Bouic (nee Elderton)**

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## Past Pupil News

It is with sadness that we have learned of the passing of the following past pupils:

- **Jean Stewart** - a former teacher at BUCHS. Jean passed away peacefully on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022 due to a recurrence of cancer. She is much missed by her family and friends.
- **Colleen Mary Findlay (née Follows)**. Colleen was born on 9 January, 1939, and died in Chelmsford on 13 June, 2022. After leaving school she trained as a primary school teacher. She spent her whole teaching career at the Priory School in Chelmsford. The school was run by nuns of the Servite Order and she became an Associate Member (lay) of the Servite Order. She married Andrew Findlay, an architect who was also a good painter. When Andrew was finally housebound in his old age, Colleen cared for him at home until his death. She herself spent the first five months of 2022 in hospital, was given a pacemaker (which did not help much) and died on 13 June. Her children (a son and a daughter) arranged her funeral at Our Lady Immaculate Church. (This information was given to Teresa Kinnear by Colleen's younger sister, Valerie Burgess, who did not attend the UHS).
- **Doreen Wilson (nee Locke)** - Doreen was a student at the school from 1941-47. She passed away on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2021, just shy of her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday. In 1997 Doreen wrote a memoir of her school days, and we hope to include an extract from that in next year's Chronicle.
- **Margaret Lillis:** Margaret spent 50 years firstly as a Catholic Sister, teacher/headteacher, Diocesan Schools Advisor and most recently as Chaplain at East Cheshire Hospice. She died peacefully aged 74 on 21 May 2022 after being diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer earlier. She joined the Ursuline Convent, Brentwood in 1966, and after 20 years decided to follow her vocation outside the religious order. In 1986 she moved north, first teaching in Warrington before taking up a post at St Edward's Catholic Primary School in Macclesfield. Margaret was appointed Headteacher at St Paul's Primary in Poynton in 1997. She was asked to be the Assistant Director of Schools for the Shrewsbury Diocese which she did until she retired in 2011. She then started to volunteer on the wards at East Cheshire Hospice, making tea and chatting to patients and family members. Her gift as a listener was spotted by the hospice

chaplain who asked her to join the chaplaincy team and when he relocated to West Yorkshire in 2016, Margaret was the obvious choice to replace him in the lead role.

Margaret loved relaxing by playing her guitar, and music and musicals were a constant source of entertainment throughout her life, and she never missed an opportunity to get a room full of people singing.

- **Brenda King (nee Stephenson).** Brenda was a longstanding and dedicated Committee member, having served both on the Old Girls Association Committee prior to it being disbanded and then the Fairview Society, where she was Treasurer for many years until she retired in 2014. As noted elsewhere, at the Reunion in 2022 she was the sole representative of those who left school between 1930 and 1940. Her daughters **Lindsay Lloyd** and **Diana Rodgers** have kindly provided the following piece about their mother:

Brenda King (nee Stephenson): (8th March, 1928-15th January, 2023). Brenda was born in Shenfield and spent a happy childhood with her older sister Margaret and brother Malcolm. She attended St.Mary's Primary School and, at the age of 11 attained a scholarship to The Ursuline High School. Brenda always said that her sister Margaret came home with such wonderful stories about the school that it was an easy decision for her to want to go there. Brenda's arrival at the school coincided with the outbreak of the Second World War and both events were to have a lasting impression on her. She adored her schooldays at The Ursuline despite the restrictions that came with wartime. She frequently spoke of gas mask checks, evacuation drills, of seeing Spitfires chase German planes away and even sitting her matriculation exams in the air raid shelter (located under the hall). It was the friendships that Brenda formed during her school days that, in many cases, lasted a lifetime. She had countless stories of the fun they had, despite the war. The experience seemed to pull everyone together in a bond that could never be replicated in peacetime. Brenda's days at the Ursuline were among the happiest of her life. After matriculating, Brenda worked as a photographer until she met and married an RAF pilot, Leslie. They had two daughters, Lindsay and Diana; and Brenda spent her time as a devoted mother, grandmother and, more recently, great grandmother. Her links to the Ursuline became ever stronger after joining "Old Girls", as she always affectionately called it. When the association was unable to meet at the school for a few years, Brenda was part of a dedicated

group who managed to keep the annual meetings going until they were able to return to the school. Brenda joined the committee and thoroughly enjoyed her time there and held the post of Treasurer for many years. Very little stood in the way of Brenda attending "Old Girls" and I know it was a great joy to her that she managed to come to last year's reunion. The Ursuline High School meant such a lot to Brenda throughout her life and she would always heartily sing the words of the school song: "Loyal and true to you, dear Convent home".

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## Memories of Sister Jude

The following are the happy memories and tributes to Sister Jude received from Past Pupils.



Here is a photo of the Roncalli Society in either 1968/69. I am sitting at the front with Sr Jude's sister, Stephanie. The three to one side of Sr Jude are Sheila Edmonds, Anne Milton, and Anne Molloy. Sheila Atkinson is third in the back row.

Sr. Jude was one of my A level English teachers (with Mrs Morris)  
I still see her sister Patricia from time to time.

**Eiblis White (nee Flynn) 1962 – 1969.**

I was privileged to know Connie – Sister Jude – Anne Scott over many years. When I came to the Ursuline High School, Brentwood, as an eleven-year-old, she was near the top of the school, and eventually Head Girl. I remember her singing in ‘HMS Pinafore’. I think it is fair to say that she is one of the reasons I joined the Community myself – she seemed to embody an ideal of Religious Life, intelligent, confident, faith-filled, and not in the least bit ‘nunny’.

She was a role-model for me in school, and when I joined the Community. I hoped to follow her to Oxford, but I didn’t quite make it. She and I both learned the guitar together. The big difference there was that she soon played brilliantly and of course composed songs some of which are still sung in churches today. Whereas I never got past the three chords for ‘Silent Night’.

When I began teaching, I learned so much from her. She would suggest things for me to read. I frequently worked with her on School productions, such as Ionesco’s ‘Rhinoceros’ and Brecht’s ‘Caucasian Chalk Circle’. We occasionally shared a class or a group for English or for RE. We ran Encounter groups and Search weekends, took groups youth hostelling, and on theatre trips. And we spent a couple of days one holiday hanging wall-paper in her mother’s new house. She wrote poetry, and I heard the first drafts of ‘A Dragon for a Friend’.

After she left the Community, I spent a few days with her in Leeds where she was studying for her Ph D. She met and married Joe Scott, a business-man and native of Yorkshire, and when he retired they relocated to Australia. We never lost touch, and I was able with another friend to spend a couple of weeks in Kalamunda with Anne and Joe. And they always visited on their frequent trips ‘home’ over the years, when they would catch up with their large families, and wide network of friends. **Sr Anne**

Anne was my forever friend. We were school mates when I was 12. Then I came to the USA. She wrote to me twice a year - all she was allowed to do when she became a nun. Our friendship flourished after she left the convent and she married Joe Scott. They and we visited back and forth between here and in the UK, and then here and Australia...plus we travelled the world over together. I miss her every day.

**Freda Callahan**

I was so sorry to hear of Sr. Jude's passing. Here is my memory of her:

She was the coolest nun around. When I was a boarder from 1969-75 she would bring her guitar and sing to us most evenings. I still remember the words of a song she wrote:

You are sad and you are gay  
And sometimes you've a charming way  
Of driving people nearly round the bend.  
Yet your bright eyes glint with fun  
And when the mischief has been done  
Your laughter has the ripple of a stream.  
You're just a little girl now  
But I know the world is waiting for you.

RIP Sister Jude. You cared about us and your music made us feel special when we were away from our families. You were a shining light.

Greetings from Switzerland,

**Andrea Gixti (aka Christine Rochat)**

How sad to hear of her demise. I loved Sister Jude. She had a sister in my year (Rosemary Spilberg). I had her as a form teacher one year. I think I was in Upper 4, (not sure). During the summer holidays I had surgery on my feet and returned with a cast on each leg so my mobility was a bit hindered!! A classroom was moved for me so I didn't have to go up the stairs. On the first day my good friend Christine Wood and I raced to the back of the class to grab seats at the back and next to each other. Sister Jude entered the classroom and looked at us and said "Joanna go sit over there" (on the right hand side), "Christine go sit over there" (on the far left hand side). I said, (with pleading face) "but Sister who will fill my pen for me? Who will bring my books up for me?", she knew I was trying to get away with something so she said "OK you two but I will be watching you". She let us stay where we were for the year (not that we were perfect pupils but we certainly respected her).

**Joanna Russell (nee Forsyth)**

If it is Sister Jude around when I was at UHS (1969-74), I remember her having a very sharp wit which I did not understand at the time.

**Catherine Spratt (Johnson)**

Sister Jude, what a beautiful lady. For me she was a guiding light & an inspiration. May she rest in peace.

**Mary Rodgers (Sexton)**

Sister Jude was the Deputy Head while I was at the School, from 1970-77 and I remember liking her very much. However, my particular and lasting memory of her dates from 1975 when she led a school trip to Rome. The hotel that we stayed in had a swimming pool and I remember being shocked to my very core to see a nun – not only without her veil – but wearing a swimming costume, of all things! It was a sight that I had never dreamt that I would behold! It made me realise that, actually, nuns were probably normal people after all!

**Marian Mann (nee Butler)**

Staff Variety Show: Christmas 1975 (or possibly 1976?)

Sr Jude wore a pair of purple, knee-high, platform boots for the whole staff finale: a rendition of 'I wish it could be Christmas every day'. Quite amazing at a time when every one of the sisters still wore black veils. Opinion was that she had borrowed the boots from a particularly stylish English (Art?) teacher, Mrs Day.

Remember thinking at the time what a really different and individual nun she was to do something so entertaining!

**Patricia Ann**

Sister Jude as she was when I knew her was a very special lady. Great teacher, loved and understood young people, beautiful singing voice, writer of books and music and great sense of humour. She has left a great legacy with her music and her books and the many young people whose lives she has impacted. RIP

**Kathy O'Brien**

Dr. Anne Scott (Sr. Jude to me) was without a doubt the most excellent teacher one could have asked for, and the teacher who left

the largest enormous and most indelible imprint on my life. (Though she might not have appreciated that metaphor.)

Sr. Jude was the consummate encourager and expander of horizons - a most completely gracious and also wonderfully warm and humorous human being - thoughtful, intelligent and always pressing on towards the truth. In many ways, she poured her very self into the lives of her students – showing us how to live, how to serve God and how to love beauty – be it in a wonderful guitar piece or a verse of Chaucer or Shakespeare.

I feel pretty confident that she was responsible for the incredible panoply of opportunities that we had at the Ursuline during my time there – from so called “Holy Hikes” (tromping through mud to Audley End or Saffron Walden) to pilgrimages to Rome, from amazing performances of *Much Ado About Nothing* and various Mystery Plays to great orchestral performances (and lovely to have her playing in the orchestra with us on some special occasions!).

Sr. Jude also grew my love for every kind of literature (slowly and painfully at first), taught me how to write, compelled me to think, and greatly influenced my life in all sorts of ways. She left school in the same year I graduated, and largely due to her influence I went on to study Philosophy at Cambridge and then Law and Public Administration at Harvard, later settling in Detroit where I have spent most of my professional life working to address issues of racism, poverty and injustice.

I brought with me my love of "A Man for All Seasons" hatched in my teacher's classes ("You; your pupils; your friends; God. *Not a bad public, that*" I can almost hear her intone), and my treasured copy of her "A Dragon for a Friend," which became a favourite story for both my children and somehow kept me connected in a small way to my high school teacher and friend.

**Debbie Fisher (nee Matthews)**

BUCHS 1973-1979 [dfisher161@yahoo.com](mailto:dfisher161@yahoo.com)

*(Debbie added a note that she would love to get together virtually with others who might like to tell stories and exchange memories about Sr. Jude as a way of celebrating her life, and would be happy to set up a zoom line if there was interest.)*

Sr Jude taught me English literature at O and A level. She was an inspirational teacher, really communicated her interest and love for her subject, and had a marvellous sense of humour.

I remember to this day my amazement at her one-woman play reading, in class, of different character parts from Sean O'Casey's Juno and the Paycock in a strong Dublin accent, bringing the language and characters alive for us. She had a real flare for drama. I have very fond memories of her getting us onto the stage and convincing us that we could act. Behind the scenes she would help out doing make-up and hair, always as if she were a professional makeup artist - which at the time astonished me!

Above all my memory of Sr Jude is of her always being encouraging, kind and positive to us, her pupils. She seemed so multi-talented, between her gift for teaching, organising, and her musical ability. It was always a pleasure to see her pick up her guitar and sing one of her beautiful hymns. She stands out my favourite teacher at the Ursuline.

**Michaela Wright** (UHS 1972-1979)

Other comments made about Sister Jude:

- I remember her for her great musicality and teaching us to sing.

**(Paula Daly)**

- A lovely woman, with the most amazing smile. RIP. **(Marie Price)**

- So sorry to hear about Sister Jude. She taught me English and gave me such a love of poetry. One in a million. **(Bernadette Walker)**

- She was my absolute favourite nun in the 60's... knew ALL the names of the Beatles and got my friend and I an audition for the NYT.

A very cool Nun indeed ! **(Terri Curtis)**

- So sad to hear about Sr Jude. She was my favourite nun. Always seemed to have her guitar nearby. **(Diana McManus, nee Shreeve)**

- If I remember correctly this is the Sister Jude that become headmistress of St Joseph's in Lincoln in the 80's. A very memorable lady. **(Hannah Emmett)**

- Very highly respected...quite a life...leaving many different wonderful memories for all who crossed her path. **(Val Aldous)**

- She was an amazing teacher and very talented. I remember loving the book she wrote about a boy with a dragon. She was my favourite teacher. **(Nicky Cope)**

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“A Dragon for a Friend” written by Anne Conway, was published by Hambleside Publishers Ltd. © 1980 ISBN 0 86042 022 1.  
The words of “Be still and know I am with you”, written by Anne Conway:

Be still, and know I am with you,  
Be still, I am the Lord.  
I will not leave you orphans.  
I leave you with my world. Be one.

You fear the light may be fading,  
You fear to lose your way.  
Be still, and know I am near you.  
I'll lead you to the day and the sun.

Be glad the day you have sorrow.  
Be glad, for then you live.  
The stars shine only in darkness,  
and in your need I give my peace.

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## **Brentwood Ursuline Alumnae Society - Annual Reunion**

**Reunion Date:** Sunday, 21 May, 2023  
**Venue:** Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School, Queen's Road, Brentwood, CM14 4EX

### **Programme:**

**1.00 – 1.50 p.m.** Registration  
**2.00 p.m.** Meeting: Guest Speaker:  
Maureen Mullally-Clarke  
**3.00 p.m.** Tea in the Refectory