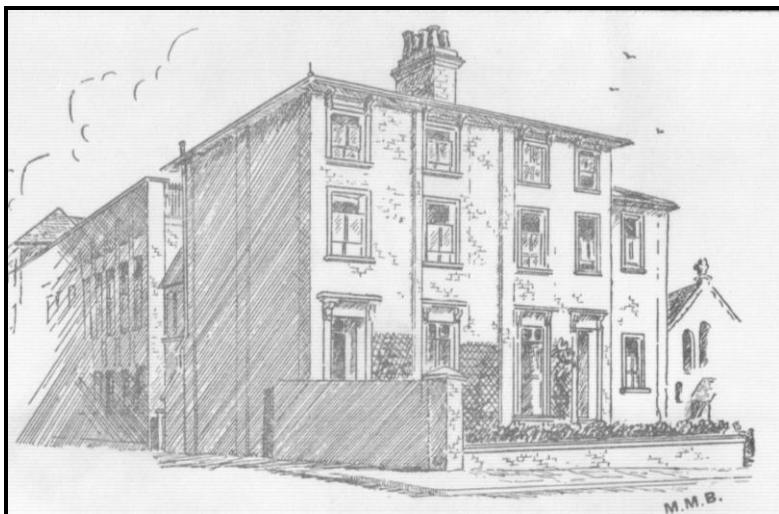


The Fairview Chronicle



"Loyal and True to you, dear Convent Home"



2021



**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: mrermann@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)
Chronicle:	Valerie Ichikawa (née West – left school 1959) Ann Camp (née Moloney) Pat King (née Nunn - left school 1956) Lucy Scully (left school 2004) Charlotte Windley
Membership Secretary:	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.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Hello Everyone!

Welcome to the 2021 edition of the Fairview Chronicle.

What strange and unsettling times we are living through at the moment. Who of us could possibly have imagined what the year 2020 had in store for us?

It turned out to be a year filled with worry, misgivings and anxiety for very many. We have endured, at the very least, a considerable modification of the way we choose to live life and there are those of us who have seen hardships and great sorrow this past year. Our hearts go out to those who have met with tragedy and sadness.

In these 'trying times', we have had to adapt to new ways of finding joy or comfort, experiencing fellowship, and maintaining our sanity. Perhaps you have discovered 'silver linings' in the clouds we have been under? Help and support from neighbours and friends, or perhaps a greater comforting sense of 'Community' as good people rally round to help one another. Or maybe you have found a renewed joy in hobbies and pastimes, or arts and crafts? Maybe you have benefited from the opportunities that modern technology can provide in connecting us with one another?

It was such a shame that we were unable to gather at the school for our Annual Reunion last May, when so many of us had been looking forward to the occasion. Little did we realise then that the ongoing situation would follow us into 2021 – and it is with sadness that the Alumnae Society committee have accepted that once again, the Reunion in May will have to be cancelled.

But let us look to the future with optimism. Surely, now, with the vaccine, there is a return to some form of 'normal' on the horizon? Let us hope so!

I wish you and your friends and families all the very best for this year. Do take care, and keep well.

Marian

Marian Mann (née Butler, 1970-77)

Treasurer's Report

Due to the Reunion being cancelled in 2020, there has been very little change in the account balances.

The Society has £1087.29 in the bank and £96.36 petty cash. As usual, this will be reduced once the 2021 Chronicles are sent out to alumnae who have asked to continue receiving them by post. Following publication last year, there was a further cost incurred a few months later for envelopes and stamps. This was prior to the Reunion, when it became necessary to advise everyone about the cancellation of the event.

Once again, thank you to those members who generously sent donations during the year.

Janet Dean (née Thompson)

FUTURE SPEAKERS NEEDED!

It occurs to me that amongst all our members, we must have girls who have enjoyed successful careers in just about every field you could think of! **We are always on the lookout for speakers for our Reunions.** It might well be the case that people would be most interested to hear all about YOUR career. PLEASE consider whether you would be willing to give a short talk, outlining your job, how you came to it, and where it may have taken you. Our School has fostered such a multiplicity of vibrant, independent and talented women over the years. It would be lovely to hear about some of the various career routes that they have taken!

Marian Mann (née Butler, 1970-77)

URSULINES REUNITED

Cynthia Nestor (Nee Armstrong) was at the school from 1953-55. She would like to hear from anyone who remembers her – in particular, Valerie Kells, Susan Holmes and Sally Hall. She would also love to see any photos from those years. She now lives in Queensland, Australia. Please contact her on cjnestor@hotmail.com

Christine Talbot Sancton was at the school from 1956-60. She has lived in Canada since 1967. She would very much like to get in touch with any who remember her. Please contact her on mcsancton@gmail.com

If **YOU** would like to try and link up with your contemporaries from your school-days, please email your request - with your name (whilst at school!) and your years, and any message - to the Membership Secretary on alumnae@buchs.co.uk under the subject heading '**Ursulines Reunited**'. You will then be featured in the next edition. (PLEASE BE AWARE that by doing this, it denotes that you are happy for your personal email address to be featured in the Chronicle.)

We have also received requests to contact the following past pupils:

- **Susan & Elisabeth Cowper** (at the UHS in the late 1950s & early 60s). They lived in Beaufort Road, Billericay. Susan went to work at Barclays Bank.
- **Alison Smith and Brenda Westlake** (at the school from 1962-68/9)
- **Amelia and Victoria Crawley** (born 1963 & 1965/66)

If anyone remembers the above, or has any idea where they are now, please contact: alumnae@buchs.co.uk - Thank you.

Past Pupil News

With sadness we have learned of the passing of the following past pupils:

- **Joan Geraldine Scott (née Hutton)**, died in April 2020. She was known by her second name, Geraldine, at school.
- **Margaret Punt (née Cole)**. Margaret Joan Cole was a wartime baby, born in Cambridge in 1941. She and her mother moved around the Country to be close to her father who was serving in the Army and after war ended, they returned to Cambridge where Margaret started school. In 1950, when Margaret was nine, the family moved to South Drive in Brentwood and Margaret and her sister Hilary attended Junction Road Primary School where they were very happy. Margaret worked hard, passed the 11+ and won a County Place to the Ursuline in 1952, as did Hilary five years later. She thrived and performed well academically and in 1959 won a place at Homerton College Cambridge where she trained to be a teacher of mathematics.

Returning to Brentwood, Margaret began teaching maths at the age of 21 at Westcliff County High School and later at Brentwood County High. In 1968 she married John at Christchurch Warley and stopped teaching when her first son, Michael, arrived in 1970 followed by David in 1973. She briefly taught at the Ursuline on a part time basis in between.

In 1979, Margaret began teaching again for the Brentwood Home Tuition Service, based at the Hermitage in Shenfield Road. The young people she taught had often been excluded from school, some were school-phobic and there were some girls who had had babies. After some 20 years teaching in this way Margaret retired. She always lived in Hutton, attended St Mary's Church, Shenfield and she looked forward to attending the Old Girls' reunion at the Ursuline each May, usually with her sister Hilary.

Margaret passed away after a brief illness on 10th June 2019 and her husband John died six weeks to the hour later. At

her funeral at St Mary's Church the Ursuline prayer was used. Malala said that, *educated girls have the power to transform our world*. I suspect that Margaret transformed the world of many of the young people she taught and the Ursuline education that she received opened up a world of opportunities to her too.

- **Joan Ashman (née Finch)** died in February 2019.
- **Mary Williams:** Information kindly provided by Pam Bangert and Linda Williams, Mary's niece. Mary died on 17 February, 2020. She was born on 17 July, 1934 and attended The Ursuline Convent in Brentwood from 1945 - 1951. She took her School Certificate and then went into the secretarial class. She held a secretarial position in London, but then in the early seventies decided she would like to teach and attended the Teacher Training College in Brentwood. When she completed the course in 1966 she joined the staff at Syon Manning School in Notting Hill and was made Deputy Head in 1972. She obtained an Open University degree in Management in Education in 1979. Mary was a very keen Guider and held a Guider's Warrant for 38 years, which included a term as Romford Division Commissioner. As a practicing Roman Catholic she was invited to become a member of the Catholic Guide Advisory Committee which was attached to the religious panel of the Headquarters of the Girl Guide movement in Buckingham Palace Road and served on that committee from 1965 to 1980 including six years as chairman. Whilst in the Chair she represented England and Wales on the International Catholic Guide Guild. In November 2007 Mary received the 'Benemerenti' Medal from Pope Benedict XV1 in recognition of her many years of continued service to the community, noting long service to Guiding and her role as a 'Catechist' in teaching the faith at her church, St Edward the Confessor, Park End Road, Romford. After her retirement she became a school governor at the Ursuline Convent. Mary was part of a group of her year fellow school mates who have met regularly every year until about three years ago. For the first few years they mostly met

in London, but subsequently have gone to each other's homes. Time has caught up with them however and the travelling has become almost impossible. Mary lived in the same house until 1970, when she moved with her father into a bungalow.

- **Alison Dakin**, died in February 2020. She was at school from 1967 – 1974. Alison was my great school friend. She was diagnosed with MS in her early twenties, but carried on working in the civil service as long as she could. As the years went by, she grew progressively weaker, but battled the disease and associated illnesses bravely. Both Julie (née Boak), who comes to the reunion annually with me) and I miss our dear friend. From Clarissa Morgan (née Putnam).
- **Rita Langler (née Rasmussen)**. At school from about 1947 until 1952. The following information was provided by Rita's daughter, Carolyn Bailey. Rita Olive Rasmussen was born in Upminster on 29 May 1936. She continued to live in Upminster throughout her life as she wanted to stay close to her parents. She always said she would like to live near the sea, and for the last three years she finally did where she lived in Westcliff at Langley Lodge nursing home. Rita attended the Bell School and together with many of her school friends, continued on to the Brentwood Ursuline, where her lifelong interest in lace making and embroidery was established. She was also a dab hand at needlework and knitting. After leaving the Ursuline, she studied typing and shorthand at the South West Technical College in Walthamstow, which she became very proficient at and further studied to become a Company Secretary. She was always very proud that she was the only one in the country to get a distinction in the accounts section when she took her exams, which was reported in The Telegraph on results day. After college, she joined the British Toy Manufacturers Association working for the Company secretary in Covent Garden and was very involved with the Brighton Toy Fair. Later she joined May and Baker helping to compile their

entries into Mimms, the doctors' bible on what drugs are for and possible side effects. She then ran the London office as a part time job for Klockner Moeller who made industrial ovens for bakers and supermarkets. Here another side of her came out producing the complete wiring diagrams for the installations. Her favourite job was working for the Export Director of Pimm's. Rita decided to leave Pimm's to allow her more time to spend with her new granddaughter. Her old boss at Pimm's went on to set up his own business importing expensive French silk scarves and ties and for some time she enjoyed spending one day a week at his Notting Hill house handling all his mail.

Rita was christened at St Laurence Church in Upminster and married Kerry there in 1959. In 1962, Kerry and Rita gave birth to their first daughter Carolyn (Cally) and welcomed their second daughter Angela (Angie) in 1966. They had six grandchildren Lauren, Tasha, Charlie, Chloe, Nathan and Tabitha and three great grandchildren.

Unfortunately, Rita never really got over losing Angela to cancer 15 years ago and her fall in Canada 10 years ago severely restricted what she could do after that. Rita sadly declined further and with the onset of Alzheimer's disease and a series of strokes, she came to reside at Langley Lodge nursing home following Kerry's sudden passing in April 2017.

- **Margaret Simons**, died aged 96. Her daughter, Barbara Simons, attended the Brentwood Ursuline from Kindergarten in 1964 up to the Sixth form in 1975. Her mother, Margaret Simons, was also a pupil at the school from approximately 1930 -1941.

Her grandmother, Gladys Greanoff, was one of the original Ursuline pupils, as her father George Greanoff was involved in the founding of the school.

Barbara tells us that throughout her life, until perhaps into her 80's she was a loyal member of what was then called the Old Girls Association. She believes her mother attended Old Girls every year since leaving school, until she felt no longer able, and the people she knew became so few, so probably she attended for around 60 years!

She loved talking about the school and there is no doubt it was a big part of her life. Her proud moment was playing the Angel Gabriel in the Mystery Play. Even when Barbara was there, it was a big thing each Christmas and really brought the school together. Barbara has not been to a meeting for some years, as she moved to Sussex and now lives in Dorset. She attended the centenary celebrations held some years ago now, with her mother. Barbara mentioned Mariette Mason who was involved in Old Girls, who may remember her.

- **Elizabeth Down (née Smith)** died peacefully at home in Ipswich after a long illness on 7 April, 2020. Her husband, Bill, and their children Simon and Sarah, were with her on what was a lovely sunny afternoon. She was born on 22 June, 1939, and was a day scholar at school from 1950 to 1955/7. There was a small family funeral on 20 April, 2020, and the family plan to hold a memorial service at a later date when things are back to normal.
- **Jeanne Mills (née Buckman).** Jeanne's funeral was held on 28 January 2021.

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### **Memoirs of Diana Farnsworth (née Buck)**

The following are extracts taken from Diana's memoirs, kindly sent to us by her son, Tom Farnsworth.

Born Diana Muriel Buck in Corby in 1923, and having lost my mother to cancer, I moved to Chelmsford when I was four years old to live with and be brought up by my dear granny, Mary Shannon Buck. We In those days hardly one motorized car a day would drive by. Coal was delivered to the house in big wagons pulled by large, Clydesdale type horses. The bakeries and dairies would do their deliveries with petrol engine vehicles though one farmer continued to deliver his milk in a horse drawn cart for a brief time.

Central to our lives was the Church of the Immaculate Conception. I was baptized, received my first Holy Communion, confirmed and

married in the church. I attended the Church of the Immaculate Conception primary school from 1929 to 1938.

After primary school, I was fortunate to receive a scholarship to the Ursuline Convent High School in Brentwood which I attended for two years. I recall several of the nuns, Mother Ursula who was the headmistress, Mothers Anthony and Scholastica who were two of my teachers. With World War Two having started during my second year, air raid sirens once went off during the bus ride. Everyone had to get off the bus and get down in the ditches on the side of the road until the all clear notice was given.

After my school days I worked in the office of Marconi's Wireless and Telegraph Company. I would also volunteer to serve food and beverages to the troops at the Rotary Club.

One Saturday night in 1942, a girlfriend and I went to a dance at Shire hall. In a "Paul Jones" dance, I happened to be paired with an American Army officer named John Farnsworth. We ended up married at the Church of the Immaculate Conception on December 6, 1943, and were married for 67 years until John's passing in 2010 at age 93. One thing my Granny always told me was that she wanted to live to see me married to the right man. She died the morning of our wedding, a sign that I had, indeed, married the right, and a good, man. In February 1946, I emigrated to the U.S. with our son, joining John in his hometown of Washington D.C. John had left the military and went to work in the private sector as we planned to make our lives in Washington. However, as a member of the reserves, he was called back into active duty, switching to the Air Force. He stayed in the Air Force, making it the first of two careers.

Through the next 20 years we travelled as John was transferred, being blessed with nine more children. John served for a year in Korea in 1952. We were stationed in the midwest U.S. in Illinois, then in England from 1957-1960. Our final assignment was Nellis AFB in Las Vegas, Nevada, where John retired. In 1970 we moved to coastal San Diego, California, our final move, where John finished his second career in management for the San Diego County Air Pollution Department.

Throughout our lives our children, family and faith is what was most important to us.

Reconnecting with my childhood church has been very rewarding. My memories of those days are all very fond ones.

## SCHOOL MUSIC VIDEOS

You will enjoy watching the following two videos, posted on YouTube by James Barber.

The first was last April, to celebrate Foundation Day 2020. It features the School Song, together with many wonderfully interesting old photos dating back to the first days of the school!  
<https://youtu.be/sezjVxhVqJ0?t=15>

The second was posted just recently in celebration of St. Angela's Day '21, and features the 'Hymn to St. Angela' by Mother Clare Arthur, together with film of the school dating from 1964. Enjoy!  
<https://youtu.be/TWcOyqrlDYg?t=1>;

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OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

Don't forget to visit our Alumnae Society Facebook Page on www.facebook.com/BrentwoodUrsulineAlumnaeSociety;
We currently have 1409 'Likes' with 1460 people 'Following' us! Please visit it to post photos of your meetings with old friends; to contact people; to post memories of your schooldays and reminisce; or just to comment generally.

Cancellation of the 2021 Annual Reunion

As mentioned in the Chairman's Letter, sadly it has been decided to cancel the Annual Reunion again this year. We would normally start making plans shortly and at this time it is difficult to predict what the situation regarding Covid will be in May. By then some of the present restrictions hopefully will have been lifted, but even so it is very doubtful if large gatherings of people indoors will be permitted, so it was reluctantly decided to cancel the Reunion again this year.