Welcome to our second edition of 'The Veseyan'. Thank you for the overwhelmingly positive feedback on Edition 1 - Paul and I are very encouraged by your enthusiasm.

This has been a poignant few months for the Vesey community. We pay tribute to and celebrate a number of ‘greats’ in this issue. We remember Peter Randon (OV), for example, our Chair of Governors for 18 years (1987-2005). A real gentleman. We will be holding a memorial service for Peter here at School in the autumn.

At the same time, we are so hopeful about the many positives in everyday BVGS life and look forward to realising exciting plans for our future.
In April, the School submitted a proposal to expand Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School Sixth Form as part of the Department for Education’s Selective Schools Expansion Fund (SSEF) programme.

Our aims are to:

- Provide the very best education and life chances for the children and young people of Birmingham and the surrounding areas.
- We want more children eligible for the Pupil Premium to benefit from our outstanding curriculum.
- We want more children eligible for the Pupil Premium to benefit from character education.
- We pledge to revise our admissions policy for 2021, increasing the % of places reserved for Pupil Premium students from 20% to 30%.
- We will work even more closely with local primary and secondary schools to share the excellence which exists at Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School with the wider school system and enable more students from disadvantaged backgrounds to benefit from a grammar school education.
- Dependent on Selective Schools Expansion Funding, we will provide additional Sixth Form pupil places, which will help meet Birmingham Local Authority need. We will increase the size of our Sixth Form from 400 places to 500 places.
- We will engage even more with local Birmingham Primary and Secondary schools.
- We will provide additional familiarisation sessions for the 11+ entrance test.
- We will widen access extending access to our site facilities and GCSE teaching resources and training to local secondary schools.
- We will inspire disadvantaged secondary students from local secondary schools to attain the very best progress through 6th Form mentoring support and access to our Oxbridge, Medical School and Careers programmes.
- We would like to secure funds from SSEF to provide the necessary accommodation to support this expansion.

We will hear if our proposal is successful in the autumn term.
Year 11 finish GCSEs

This year, year 11 and their form tutors and head of year gathered on Big School steps for their leaving photo. Whatever the pathway our boys take in September 2019, we are very proud of them all. They will always be Veseyans. We wish them the very best for their next stage of education and training.

A huge thank you to all staff, who have invested so much time in our Year 11 boys. Special mention goes to Mr Williams (Head of Year 11) and the form tutor team of Mr Bradley (Blue), Mrs Storey (Gold), Miss Green (Red) and Mr Everett (White) for everything they have done to motivate and inspire the students.

It’s ‘goodbye’ from them..

This was very poignant for the School. I remember meeting the Class of 2019 for the first time way back in May 2012. It was my first year as Headteacher of Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School. During the last 7 years, I have been so impressed with the way those Year 7 boys have transformed into adults. They were the first year of the new 9-1 grades in English Language and Mathematics GCSE. However, they achieved record results.

Throughout the School, they have always contributed to the life of the School. This year group contains loquacious debaters, virtuosic musicians and some of the best sportsmen the School has ever seen. Who can forget this year group’s stunning fightback on the hallowed rugby turf of the Allianz arena back Year 10? Who can forget the outstanding Under 15 Hockey team that was? And what about the countless brilliant music performances on the Vesey stage. Above all, they have shown great humour and inter-personal skills.

It has been a privilege over the last two years for us to be joined by a super set of 6th Formers from all backgrounds across the Midlands. They will be remembered for stunningly good contributions. The performances of March 2018 of Macbeth and Living with Lady Macbeth sticks in my head with great contributions from OVs and NVs alike. And what about our ground-breaking team of valiant ladies: the Vesey Vultures, who impressed so much on the field of rugby at Rosslyn Park this year? And let’s not forget the great community spirit this year group has embodied: fund-raising for worthy charitable causes, and of course, the re-invigoration of our House system: we owe some of our Officers and leaders a huge debt of gratitude.

We wish sincerely wish all of the Class of 2019 well for the future. Enjoy the summer. And remember, you are all Old Veseyans now.

Key dates for the diary of our Leavers:

Friday 29 November 2019, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall, 18:00 for 18:30-20:00: Speech Day. A level Certificates (and Prizes) will be distributed by our guest speaker Tom Wallis OV (1998-2005), who is a Royal Navy helicopter pilot. For all leavers, parents and staff.

Come to the first reunion of the U6th Class of 2019 on Thursday 19 December 18.30-20.00 for drinks in Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School Sixth Form Common Room for leavers and staff.

Jobs and careers fair Friday 7 February 2020 for leavers

Sports and Music Reunion Saturday 20 June 2020 for leavers, parents and staff

OVA Dinner Saturday 9 November 2020 for leavers and staff

A big thank you to all the staff who have worked with the Class of 2019, especially Mr Goodwin Head of Sixth Form, Dr Reilly, Head of Year, Mr Hutchieson (Head of Year) and Mr Doughty (Head of Year) and the pastoral team of Mr Novek, Mrs Brown, Mrs Hodkinson, Mrs Arrandale, Mrs Evetts, Miss Williams and Miss Steadman.
After joining Bishop Vesey’s senior choir this year, we have attended weekly rehearsals where we were taught a range of music styles, along with students in both the upper sixth and key stage 4. We went on to perform these songs in winter, spring and summer concerts accompanied by the orchestra and other musicians. As well as forming part of our enrichment, we have had the chance to meet like-minded people and join a community that plays such a major role in school life.

We were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to participate in the European Music Tour to Paris. During this tour, we joined the lower school choir and the orchestra to perform a collection of songs at the Videopolis in Disneyland Paris, as well as in several parks to members of the public. This insightful experience gave us a taste into the life of professional musicians and developed our ability to deal with the challenges that come with it. Following our performance, we spent the day enjoying both theme parks and experiencing the variety of rides that they had to offer (our favourite being the Rock ‘n’ Roller coaster).

Along with showcasing Bishop Vesey’s musical talent, we also had the opportunity to take in the beautiful Parisian skyline from the Montparnasse Tower, explore the streets of a lively capital and shop below one of the city’s most notorious global attractions, the Louvre. Using our French-speaking skills to translate and order in cafes proved a true challenge but very amusing nonetheless! To conclude our trip, we relaxed on a boat cruise along the River Seine and were able to take in some of Paris’s most famous sights.

Despite challenges from the extreme weather and the accommodation, the trip was certainly one to remember. Our week was filled with laughter and our experience this year as members of the senior choir has allowed us to further integrate into this school, whilst enhancing our musical abilities and thriving confidence. We would like to thank all the teachers and students that made the trip amazing and the chance to join such a wonderful community possible!

By Ellie Mitchell and Alice Blackburn

Spring Concert

The Spring Concert took place in April this year and was a fitting build up to this summer’s tour to Disneyland Paris. The theme for this concert was film and TV and included many great scores including music from ‘Spider Man’, ‘The Terminator’ and ‘Hawaii 5-0’, with the evening being topped of by a marvellous medley entitled ‘A Disneyland Celebration’ and for the grand finale, ‘The Lion King’ performed by both the Lower School and Senior choirs, the orchestra and the drumline.

A special thank you must be said to Angus Carter and his many years as a musician at BVGS. In his final concert as a Veseyan, not only did he play in the Funky Bishops and the Orchestra, but also conducted the wind band and performed a farewell solo as part of the brass band, mastering the challenging ‘La Virgen de La Macarena’.

Thank you to all the teachers, performers and technicians who have helped music at the school run so smoothly and to Mr Buxton, who had led both the Spring and Christmas Concerts this year with great success.
Alumni Concert

It was such a delight to have Xhosa Cole OV, Young Jazz Musician of the Year 2018 with us, alongside the incredible Georgina Jones OV, who is due to star in Jerry Springer the Opera in Manchester in August, along with many others for our very first alumni concert on Saturday 22nd June. It was such an inspiration for our young musicians to work with these superstars. A huge thank you to everyone who made the day such a success, especially Mr Davies and Mr Buxton for their organisation, enthusiasm and verve!

Staff Leadership Success

Congratulations to Mr Buxton who was nominated for Pearson Outstanding Teacher of the Year and to Ms Crosthwaite, English Department, who has won a prestigious SSAT Leadership Fellowship for 2019-20. Congratulations to them both.

Biology Big Quiz

The Biology Big Quiz is a prestigious event held annually in the magnificent Great Hall found at the heart (intended pun!) of the University of Birmingham. It was an exciting day filled with fun questions testing us on our general knowledge of Biology. Bishop Vesey's entered three teams and I was fortunate to be in the winning team with my friends, Ashwin Kumar, Moonis Haider and Oliver Gray-Nimmo. We also secured the third and fourth positions in the competition making us the most successful school at the event. Furthermore, we dethroned our close rivals, King Edward VI Camp Hill Boys!

We are proud of our achievements this year at the Biology Big Quiz and aspire that the school will retain the title next year.

-Chirag Guha 10W

RSC Chemistry Olympiad Winners

Well done to our magnificent Cambridge Chemistry Challenge winners from L6 (right):

Omar Takruri (Copper), Ellie Snape (Copper), Matthew Bate (Silver) and Henry Hewins (Copper)

UKMT

There have been various Mathematical challenges and competitions years 7-10 have participated in this year. First was the National Young Mathematicians Awards for Y7/8, where we qualified for round 2, narrowly missing out on the national final. We also took a team of 2 y8s and 2 y9s to the UKMT Maths Challenge Regional Final where we came a very creditable 3rd place. This year also saw the third House Maths competition for Y7-10 running over 3 lunchtimes.

We have also been involved in the UKMT individual Maths challenges again this year. Y9 and 10 sat the Intermediate challenge paper and achieved excellent results with 29 Golds and an incredible 8 students qualifying for the Olympiad. Two of these went on to win medals, placing them in the top 100 in the country. Y7 and 8 sat the Junior Maths Challenge, again with 29 Golds and a student qualifying for the Junior Olympiad. This year we have also run fortnightly Maths problem solving clubs with one for Y7/8 and one for Y9/10. These will definitely help to improve our future UKMT results.
Stand with Anne

We are grateful to the Anne Frank Trust for offering us an exhibition on one of the most discussed Jewish victims of the Holocaust, Anne Frank. Anne, who died in Bergen Belsen concentration camp, gained fame posthumously with the publication of The Diary of a Young Girl (originally Het Achterhuis in Dutch; English: The Secret Annex), in which she documents her life in hiding from 1942 to 1944, during the German occupation of the Netherlands in World War II. It is one of the world’s best known books and has been the basis for several plays and films. Her story tells us a lot about the evils of prejudice and the importance of standing up for truth and justice.

The Trust trained a group of 20 peer guides. Subsequently Deputy Headteacher, Ruth Hearn, and Assistant Headteacher, Kate Steadman, went in June to the Houses of Parliament with three of our students: Charlie, Felix and Lemar, who are all Anne Frank Ambassadors. We were one of just a few schools nationally to be involved with this amazing event.

The highlight of the day was the opportunity for our students to meet the inspirational Eva Schloss, Anne Frank’s stepsister.

Jabberwocky

Based on the Lewis Carroll poem from Alice through the Looking Glass, this play was a humorous fantasy romp that was lots of fun. It follows the story of Ned, who runs away from home into the forest. After many adventures, he eventually finds himself tasked with killing the Jabberwocky itself, a fearsome monster! Well done to our cast of 40+ students for giving us a real treat over two nights in July. Thank you to Rebekah O’Dowd, Aoife O’Dowd, Ella McGrail, Simon Garrington, Luke Butcher and above all Beth Brown for leading an amazing production. It was fabulous.
Duke of Edinburgh

On the weekend of the 4-5 May, Y9 took part in our DoE Bronze Practice Expedition around the Lickey Hills.

On the Saturday morning groups met at either 11 or 12 and set off about half an hour later to begin the 10 mile walk to the campsite in the Lickey Hills. The weather was constantly changing with sudden showers followed by bright sunshine but overall it was a nice day walking through the Clent Hills into the Lickeys.

From 5.30 to 7.30 groups arrived, set up their tents and had dinner - which was mainly a form of pasta and sauce - before the awful task of washing-up burnt pans! In the morning after a breakfast of mostly porridge (apart from one attempt at an omelette!), we set off on the short walk to Barn Green Station where the expedition was completed. I'm sure everyone is looking forward to the Qualifying Expedition and receiving the Bronze Award.

Harry Dowen 9R

During the DoE training expedition I learnt a lot, like how to set up a tent, unpack and pack a sleeping bag, navigate, road safety, country code, how not to cook pasta and to bring more than just shorts next time! The freedom and independence given to us by the instructor was great as well, although we did get lost at least twice. It was a really good experience that I highly recommend to anyone wanting to have a good time while also getting an award for it.

Daniel George 9R

Over the May bank holiday weekend, groups of BVGS Year 9 and Year 10 students, supported by 6 teachers, successfully completed bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh practice expeditions, under mixed weather conditions but fortunately nothing too extreme. The groups were encouraged to be self-sufficient in planning, transporting and making their own camps, taking with them supplies and means to cook. This years practice was in and around the Bromsgrove area, with all groups completing their challenges successfully, at least we are not aware of any groups still on their way to Wales, like a bronze group last year. The expeditions took place on a variety of different terrains, from streets to huge hills and even stretches on the canal-side. All attending were very grateful of the expertise provided by Big Strides. With everybody being successful, we are now looking forward to our qualifying expedition later in the summer. I've had a fantastic time and would highly recommend this to any student seeking a challenge in the great outdoors.

Alex Dixon 10R

DoE was a great experience where I have learnt many valuable lessons that will help me in the qualifying expedition in July. The routes were long and tiring which required you to persevere even when you get lost. The Big Strides team were a great help with refills of water and nudging us in the right direction. Overall I thoroughly enjoyed it and I am looking forward to July.

Jordy Cani 10P

Thank you to Miss Langham for her leadership of DoE.

Ski Trip 2019

Brrrrr!! Very early on Saturday 9 of February, 45 of us frozen, tired but excited students and teachers set off for Mont St Anne, Quebec, Canada. Great travel adventures ensued (if you count three hours on a coach singing Wheels On The Bus). Soon enough however, we arrived at our resort after a seven hour flight and another three hour coach journey (which I spent asleep and so did many others); it was now eleven PM local time yet eighteen hours after we had left home.

Ski School had our helmets, boots and skis ready for our lessons the next morning, then we were ready to ski. Knowing that we were all of different abilities, they split us up into groups based on our prior skiing experience. In the perishing conditions of the slopes we had to wrap up warm beforehand and gear up. Then my group (the middle group) travelled up the ski lift to get to the beginners slope to test our skills. Restoring our energy, we ate lunch at the canteen and a chance to warm up. In our second slot of skiing for the day, we went on the larger ski lift to go to the top of the slopes as we had developed the basic skills at the foot of the slope. Pupils, like myself, continued a similar timetable to this throughout the week, however we also did many other enjoyable activities, like jumping into the lovely warmth of... the breakfast queue.

-22 degrees Celsius was the temperature when we visited the Old Town of Quebec and were given the freedom to explore the area. It was the chance the teachers had of beating us on the sledging as we flew down the ramp at electrifying speeds. 1 memorable week in which we visited a frozen waterpark, the Old Town of Quebec and the Olympic Stadium in Montreal. 9.6 is what I would rate this trip out of 10 as it was really fun learning how to ski with my friends and learn a little bit about the Canadian culture and I would fully recommend this trip to anyone who wants to have a good time or wants to learn a new skill. I’d also like to thank all of the teachers for giving up their time to look after us and ultimately put up with us for a whole week. Thank you to Mr and Mrs Bousfield and all the staff for leading this expedition.

Jack Desveaux in 8W
German Exchange (the 22nd one)

The German exchange week in England was great. Whilst we were at school, our exchange partners had the chance to explore Birmingham and its multi-culturalism, shopping and, on their way home, they went to London to watch a musical. On one day we had a combined trip to Drayton Manor and we had a great time. Overall their visit was a great success and everyone enjoyed it. We got to meet new friends, improve our German and have a few laughs. They were all really nice and we are looking forward to our trip there. Thank you Mr G - we will miss you.  
Finn Epting 10B

World Challenge 2019

World Challenge is an experience that all of us are excited about, and after our practice expedition, we cannot wait!

When we arrived on a chilly Saturday morning, loaded with heavy packs, and showing off our equipment, we had absolutely no idea what was in store for us. It began with us meeting our instructor, who asked us about any previous experiences we had. This was followed by putting up the tents, and unpacking the kit, and in turn, led to a couple of rounds of cricket before we got going. We set off for a walk around Cannock Chase, with a light mood. The navigating was generally very good, and when we did go wrong we soon got back on track. The rests we had during the walk gave us the opportunity to learn lots about the expedition from our instructor. At the end of the day, we cooked Spaghetti Bolognese, which turned out to be delicious! However, it did take quite a while to get everybody fed! The second day began with a porridge breakfast, followed by a lot of washing up, before we decamped and set off for a second walk. The navigation didn’t go quite as well this time, but we made it back safely in the end.

We all very much enjoyed the expedition, but by the end could not wait to get back to our beds! In our actual expedition, we will be doing walks like this in Paklenica National Park in Croatia, as well as sea and river kayaking, all the while struggling through the Croatian language, and camping in the middle of nowhere.  
Hugh Woodcock, World Challenger

The Peter Bolton (OV) Memorial Project

In the summer term Year 8 students completed a project called Lost and Found. The project is in memory of his brother Peter Bolton, also an Old Veseyan (OV). Peter was a local artist and still has an installation in Lichfield today. He enjoyed creating quite large installations often using recyclable materials. The students were asked to create their own ‘Shadow Boxes’ in response to a theme. Students were encouraged to be creative, to explore their theme to its fullest effect. They used paper mache, drawing, collage, ceramics and real objects to create their box. All students did incredibly well with this project. Geoff Bolton has been in to meet with the boys on two separate occasions, and he chose the following students to be awarded for their Shadow Boxes gaining a higher overall achievement. Well done! Charan Tiwana 8B, Charlie Ward 8B, Charlie Cooper 8G, Yuvraj Rai 8G, George Howell 8G, Finley Paterson 8G, Rohit Jakhu 8G, Aaron Cunningham 8P, Viraj Gupta 8R, Ben Patterson 8R, Alex Heirbaut-Kitteridge 8R, Max Saunders 8R, Vivek Chawdary 8R, Adam Aslam Cheatham 8W and Joe Williams 8W.
**Summer Term 2019**

**Inspirational Art**

We were delighted to host our annual Art exhibition over two nights at the prestigious and beautiful Argentea Gallery, 28 St Paul’s Square, Birmingham B3 2RB. We are so grateful to Jenny Anderson, Argentea Gallery, for allowing us to do this. As you can see, we had an absolutely superb array of Art to view. Brilliant! Thank you to Mrs Heer (Head of Art), Mrs Rowlands, Mrs Gregory, Mr Belcher, Mr Boyle, Mr Goodwin for your hard work in making this amazing event to happen. And a huge congratulations to all our talented and creative artists.
Valetes

Tim Brown joined us from St Francis of Assisi, Aldridge in September 2017 as Head of Design Technology. Results have soared, student practical skills have improved. We also now have 2 Arkwright Scholars. A great legacy. He has also assisted with rugby coaching for the U14 and U15B Team. We wish him well in his new role as Assistant Headteacher at QMGS.

Tom Lintern joined us in September 2016 as an NQT. Just 12 months later, he became Head of Computing. An enthusiastic and positive member of staff. He will be missed. Moreover, his departure reduces the firepower of our staff football team considerably. We wish him well in his new post as Head of Computing at Wrekin College.

Herr Rudiger Gotschel (der Rudimeister) was born in 1955 in Bayreuth in the south-eastern state of Germany, Bavaria. We have been blessed to have him teaching with us for the last 22 years. Drop ins to German have always been interesting. One of my favourite visits was when Sir told his class to stand up straight and put their hand on their hearts. He then cued up the music and sang the German national anthem solo at the top of his voice from start to finish. 22 years is a long time. That’s an awful lot of marking, planning and hard work. 22 school exchanges to Bayreuth, a lot of trips to the Rhineland. An energetic teaching life lived to the full. Mr Gotschel is wonderful – students have loved learning German (and French) with him. (I suspect that they would have loved it whatever he was teaching them.) Above all, the students have always reflected back the love, energy and enthusiasm Mr Gotschel has always shown to his classes. Mr Gotschel- we will miss you. Your legacy will live on in the amazing impact you have had in inspiring students and staff alike. Thank you.

We will miss our departing Head of Geography, Elliot Godwin. Every one of his lessons can be characterised by his calm demeanour and genuine interest in his subject. He has been instrumental in a number of trips, from Shropshire and Sutton to Iceland and Canada, always with a really positive demeanour. Elliot has coached teams throughout his time at Vesey. He has given willingly of his time and expertise. His dedication and the countless hours of his own time that he has given to geographers and school sport have been of massive benefit to all of our students. Good luck as Head of Geography at Cheslyn Hay.

Philip Nowek attended BVGS as a student between 2003 and 2010 before going onto achieve a First Class Honours Degree in Ancient History from the University of Bristol. In his role as the Sixth Form ‘UCAS Advisor and Student Support Officer’, he excels in the area of Higher Education advice and has an extensive knowledge of these fields. He has also run mentoring schemes in conjunction with local Universities and provided numerous opportunities to students from a range of backgrounds. He is a patient, supportive, perceptive and caring professional person, who we wish all the very best as he starts his training to become a History teacher from September 2019.

Kamran Ali joined the Maths department last September as an NQT. Kamran has taught across the age ranges during his time here at Bishop Vesey’s with a calm approach. He is now leaving us to go and study medicine in Turin. We wish him all the best in his new vocation.

Tom Beasley joined the Maths department in September 2016 and quickly threw himself into the role of second in department. He established a system of sixth form mentors for key stage 3 pupils and a problem solving club. He ran the UK Maths Challenges for the school and under his guidance we got our best ever maths challenge results. Outside of Maths he helped out with Hockey and for a year ran Young Chefs. At the end of his first year here he went on one of the World Challenge trips to Croatia and is presently in Croatia again with a group of year 9 pupils. Tom is moving on to become the Head of Maths at the University of Birmingham School.

Pavlos Panagiotidis joined us at Bishop Vesey’s in January 2019. Whilst his time with us was short it was nevertheless hugely impactful. He ensured hundreds of students enjoyed learning Physics through his energy, humour, warmth and subject knowledge and he will be dearly missed by those he taught. Whilst both students and staff in the Physics department are saddened to see him leave, we’re happy that he is pursuing a longstanding dream career in theatre and drama at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London. We wish him well in his new chapter in life!

Laura Diprose started as a Newly Qualified Teacher in September 2007. At the end of her interview lesson she was given a standing ovation by the class and we knew that she would make an excellent teacher. Laura taught Italian and French across all Key Stages and in 2009 she became Head of French. Laura has organised and led visits to Rome and Normandy and ran a successful sixth form exchange with a school in Lyon. She raised the profile of French throughout the school and enhanced the curriculum with events such as Bastille Day, French breakfasts, D-Day commemorations and taster lessons of pétanque and lacrosse. Laura has done so much for the school and she will be greatly missed.

It has been a delight to have Mr Oliver Ayto (OV, 2015) teaching at BVGS this year in Economics. He has been a real asset as a teacher and has been inspirational in taking Y10 and Y11 students on trips to his alma mater, Oxford University. We have also appreciated his commitment to our community, supporting school Art and managing the staff football team! We wish him well in his management trainee role at Ocado.

We also say goodbye to Mrs Pauline Knowles who has been offering careers advice one day a week to our students. Thank you and good luck.

We will miss our departing Head of Geography, Elliot Godwin. Every one of his lessons can be characterised by his calm demeanour and genuine interest in his subject. He has been instrumental in a number of trips, from Shropshire and Sutton to Iceland and Canada, always with a really positive demeanour. Elliot has coached teams throughout his time at Vesey. He has given willingly of his time and expertise. His dedication and the countless hours of his own time that he has given to geographers and school sport have been of massive benefit to all of our students. Good luck as Head of Geography at Cheslyn Hay.
Obituaries

Mr Peter Randon (OV) (04.03.40 - 03.07.19)

We remember a Vesey great, who died this July. Mr Peter Randon OV followed in the footsteps of his father Alfred George Randon and joined Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School in 1956. He went on to become a Governor for 23 years, 18 of those as Chairman (1987-2005) and what a fruitful period of development this was for the School.

For many years, we have held our annual get together, known as the Shaggy Dogs Tea Party, for senior Old Veseyans at the Randon family home. This year, despite Peter’s death, was no exception and it was fitting that Headteachers, Marie Clarke (1989-2002) and David Iddon (2003-2013) were both there for the occasion.

Peter was a huge servant of Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School. He was a significant benefactor and instrumental in delivering strategic infrastructure development such as the Randon Centre, the Tennis Courts and Cricket Nets. He loved attending school music concerts and was a huge supporter of Vesey cricket, umpiring many a school game here at BVGS on Saturdays, while serving as Chairman of Governors. Above all, Peter was a gentleman with a commitment to whole-person education and his courteous values had a huge impact on the development of the culture of Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School.

We hope to hold a memorial service for Peter here at School in November.

Mr Jim Carr (05.11.44 - 05.06.19)

On the first Wednesday of every month a group of retired ex Bishop Vesey staff meet to exchange pleasantries and to find out about each other's activities and developments over the last month. These meetings are generally happy occasions. However, the last meet was very sad when the news came through during our gathering that Jim Carr had passed away during that morning. What is the connection between this group and Jim Carr?

Jim’s first involvement with Bishop Vesey GS began when his two sons Robert and Ian entered this school. Mr and Mrs Carr were very supportive parents and would attend all activities that their sons were involved with. This support did not finish once their sons had completed their education here. Mrs Carr became a school governor, while Mr Carr realised, being a keen sportsman all of his life, that there was an opportunity to use his sporting prowess and coaching qualifications to help the school in the running of rugby and cricket teams. Rugby wise he helped to coach junior rugby squads and he often managed a B team each season. He particularly loved to see the players' enthusiasm in games and matches despite the lack of high skill levels as seen in the A teams. He regularly told the story of one occasion when he had refereed a U13 B team match where a set of twins (the Roadknight twins) were the two props of the scrum. Both the boys, Alex and James, got stuck into the hard work required by front row forwards with total commitment. Mr Carr approached one of the twins at the end of the game asking if they had enjoyed the match. The reply was “Yes sir. I loved it. Did we win?” the Vesey team had won comfortably!

Mr Carr also was asked to act as one of the members of staff on two of the senior rugby tours; one to Canada and one to Australia. His senior experience and his bubbly enthusiasm towards ensuring that everyone experienced a trip of a lifetime was very much appreciated by both Veseyans and the opposition.

Due to his own love of cricket, Mr Carr’s biggest contribution to BVGS would probably be his role as member of staff in charge of senior cricket. He used his coaching qualifications and experience of coaching junior Warwickshire CC teams to ensure that his players performed at their very best levels against high class opposition; fixtures that Mr Carr had organised as part of his duties. He was also instrumental in helping the school obtain sufficient funds and sponsors to improve on the cricket facilities such as the practice nets, pitch covers, side screens etc. Once more one of the key factors of his success was how he interacted extremely well with the pupils and how they responded positively towards reaching the high targets that Mr Carr had set.

At the end of the season Mr Carr would organise a meal at a local “curry house” to celebrate their successes, many of the staff’s and pupils’ fondest memories will be of events such as this out of the school environment.

The Director of sport, Mr Howell, fondly remembers the many hockey away fixtures where Mr Carr was hired to drive the school minibus. There was always a great deal of humour coming from the driver’s direction!

When the school sports hall was first opened it was felt that it was being underused in the evenings. One of the conditions of receiving grant money to build the hall was to ensure it was available for public use. Mr Carr was employed as the lettings manager for the sports hall. Due to his vast network of connections in the sporting world it was not very long before the hall was being extensively used for cricket nets, football and basketball. The funds from these lettings obviously helped the school maintain and improve on its other sporting facilities.

All of this he has managed along with his other activities. These included: performing duties as a husband, father and grandfather; belonging to a choir with regular concerts, helping with a food bank; assisting with the development of educational teaching in a region of Malawi, raising funds to help equip their schools; a season ticket holder with Wasps and Warwickshire CCC (also a tour guide to the latter); joining his church group to run luncheon meals and after lunch activities in their church hall for senior citizens to name just some of his endeavours.

The connection was that the majority of the Vesey staff knew Mr Carr well as do many hundreds of people who have come across Jim. If his spirit is to live on then I can only ask you to follow in his beliefs that he so admired in the Roadknight twins. That is if you wish to gain fulfillment and satisfaction in any aspect of your lives then you simply “get stuck in” and apply yourselves 100% no matter what level you are able to perform at.

Mr Peter Cragg.
Member of BVGS staff 1989-2014
OLD VESEYAN ASSOCIATION
Please send contributions to this section of The Veseyan to the editor Stephen Roberts: roberts384@btinternet.com.

News
The OVA Dinner takes place on Saturday 9 November. There will be a champagne reception from 6.30 pm in Old Big School and we sit down for dinner at 7.30 pm. Booking forms can be found on the BVGS website under alumni or on the BVGS alumni platform. Cheques are payable to the OVA and should be sent to Paul Wallis, 98 Hollyfield Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B75 7SH. Contact for BACS details if preferred. Paul’s email address is: wallis4@btopenworld.com

We are sorry to record the death on 13 August 2018 of Grahame William Eaton (1948-51). Eleanor Eaton tells us that Grahame arrived in Australia from Scotland by tug in 1956 and that they met in 1956 and married in June 1958. Grahame played rugby and did a little cross-country.

We are also sorry to record the death on 13 January 2019 of Kenneth Frederick Huggins (1940-49). Anne Huggins tells us that he was a great ambassador for the school and spoke highly of it a lot.

We are also sorry to record the death of John L Whitworth (1932-9). His funeral takes place at Stonefall Crematorium, Harrogate on 16 July.

A chat with Chris Adams
Adams Ironmongers is one of the best-known local businesses in Sutton Coldfield. Who hasn’t popped in for lawnmower repairs, key-cutting, nuts, bolts or lavatory chains? The proprietor of this well-known emporium is Old Veseyan Chris Adams (1970-77).

1. The business was established by your grandfather. When was this and have you always occupied the same premises? My grandfather established the business in 1949, when he bought the building. And, yes, we have been on this site for 70 years. My grandfather was a veteran of the First World War and, considering himself lucky to have survived it, retired early in about 1947. He saw the site come up for sale and could not resist buying it.

2. When did you take over running the business? I started to work at the business in 1982. I started Adams Industrial Supply as a subdivision of Adams Ironmongers. We supplied useful things to commercial customers, nuts, bolts, tools, locks etc. This was very successful and grew and grew until, at its peak in 1992, it was turning over twice the money the shop was. We had about forty large customers, including IMI, Tucker Fasteners, Metro Camel, the NEC, the ICC etc. At this point we considered closing the shop as a good living could be made with just a van. I am pleased we didn’t close the shop as most of those customers have now gone and today the shop is still important to us.

3. What flies off the shelves at Adams Ironmongers? I don’t think there is any one thing that flies off the shelves, but lots of things sell reasonably well. Old Veseyans often identify themselves when they visit the shop and I am always delighted to meet them.

4. What do you remember about your first day at BVGS? It seemed such a large, scary place, with masters wearing gowns. The headmaster Arthur Johnson wore a mortar board and had a gift of remembering pupils’ names ... so, as he passed me in the corridor saying “Hello, Adams”, I felt I was being singled out!

5. Which masters made the greatest impact on you? The ones I remember most are ‘Taff’ Jones, Bill Roberts and Mr Udale. I remember one of Bill Roberts’ stories about his wartime experiences that went something like this: “We pulled into Portsmouth, next to the Rodney, just after her encounter with the Schnadhorst. The decks were bent round in a U-shape, the metal on the decks was that thick”, showing you, with fingers, about six inches. “It made you think. What did it make you do, Adams?” “Made you think, sir.” Since reading Ludovic Kennedy’s book Pursuit: The Sinking of the Bismarck I now understand what he was on about.

6. Where were your talents most evident during your years at BVGS? In the science lab? The art room? The rugby field? I never thought of myself as talented in any special way, but I had a good time with all these things, especially dropping potassium into water in the science lab.

The OVA Dinner - 9 November 2019
This summer marks ten years since my peers and I left Vesey’s on a sunny day in May 2009. I can vividly recall the outfits, enjoyment and tinge of sadness on that last day of school; that last day spent as a year group. The summer exams came and went and so we turned from students to alumni, from school boys to old boys.

The Class of 2009 had fantastic sportsmen, musicians and academics but most importantly great friendship groups. Since leaving, many friendship groups have grown closer and many have experienced great success. As time has passed, weddings and graduations, babies and migrations have taken place, and inevitably time has seen people heading in different directions. Even with social media and modern technology, keeping in touch with each other and with the School can be challenging. As such, we can turn to the Old Veseyan Association and events such as the OVA Dinner and events such as the OVA Dinner on Saturday 9 November to rekindle friendships and reconnect with peers, teachers and experiences that have become faded memories. This year the dinner doubles as focal point for the 10-year reunion of the Class of 2009. I would hope to see as many of my classmates there as possible and I know all those who go will have a great time. As the School moves forwards and expands, it is important to recognise experiences of the past. The 9 November offers the perfect chance to do that, so please get in touch and get yourself a ticket. We may have turned from school boys to old boys, but we will all always be Veseyans.

Tom Greenwood (2002-09)
NTM taught history at BVGS from 1966 until 1996. We asked him for a few memories of his time at the school...

Where were you educated and where did you teach before you arrived at BVGS? I was educated at Charterhouse and read history at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. My first teaching post was at Wellingborough Junior School. I stayed there for four years and a term and then went to Falcon College, near Bulawayo, in (what was) Rhodesia, where I became head of history. I had family connexions in that country and wanted to broaden my experience. On my return I studied for a PGCE at the University of Exeter – and then joined the teaching staff at BVGS.

Who else was teaching history at the school when you arrived? Which other masters on the staff stood out? When I arrived in 1966, I was one of seven new staff. The school was introducing a fourth intake – hence Gold House. I was a boarding house master for two years. I taught history with P M Walmsley – we worked together for eighteen years – and D C Watts. I had the highest regard for the headmaster A J Johnson – a thoroughly good man.

What area of history did you most enjoy teaching? I specialised in European history, eventually covering the whole period 1494 to 1970. BVGS was a trial school for the Schools History Project in 1973 – a syllabus I thought very worthwhile. I could bore you for forty five minutes on its value if you wanted me to!

What was BVGS like when you arrived? A truly professional school.

Martin Hull remembers cars and King Crimson

Old Veseyan Benevolent Fund

Renewal of Old Friendship from the 1960s
Vesey Vultures

At the end of March the team made the journey down to London for the 7s tournament at Rosslyn Park. We were very happy to have reached the Quarter Finals, only to be knocked out by the winners of the tournament. Mr Whitting was very proud of us and we were all elated with how this season has turned out for us.

Unfortunately, this was my last game with the team but it was a wonderful send off for the upper sixth girls. Both Mr. Whitting and the lower sixth girls are determined to carry on the legacy and will be doing so as another generation of women join the Vesey Community.

I also just wanted to say thank you very much for your continued support and that the team will continue to wear the kit (supplied by the OVA and Veseyan RFC 200 Club) with pride and in appreciation of the contributions of the OVA. Nour Gado (U6)

Hockey - BVGS First XI 2 v Rugby School First XI 4

A mouth-watering Midlands clash in the fourth round of the National School Hockey Tier 2 Competition. Both teams were in really good form with BVGS having lost just one game all season.

The pace of the game was of a tempo which suited BVGS, although the Rugby forwards were not only quick, but highly skilled and this posed a threat to the BVGS defence, so a cagey encounter pursued.

Rugby opened the scoring with a well worked goal after 18 minutes, this didn’t phase BVGS and they played some exciting Hockey at times but lacked fire power in front of goal, creating numerous chances but not converting. Rugby scored a second goal after half time with another well worked goal. BVGS dug in and deserved to score after 15 minutes of the restart, through James Davey. With score at 2-1 things started to get a little tasty, rugby won a Penalty Stroke, however, Nathan Lawrence made a superb save. This gave BVGS renewed energy and they started searching for that all important equaliser. However, BVGS were caught on the counter attack and Nathan Lawrence made a reckless challenge on the Rugby forward and was dismissed with a yellow card and 10 minutes in the sin bin with just 10 minutes left of normal time. With another Penalty stroke being awarded BVGS only had a kicking back in goal and Rugby School duly converted to make the score 3-1. Within 20 seconds of the restart 10 man BVGS scored a superb goal with Harry West scoring from close range in the top left corner of the goal. With BVGS looking to equalise gaps in midfield and defence gave Rugby School to counter attack on numerous occasions. The final counter led to another reckless challenge from Captain Archie Sansome, he was also dismissed and Rugby School sealed the game with another converted Penalty Stroke to win 4-2. A very entertaining game, but unfortunately BVGS came up a little short.

Chris Roberts

Snapshot of Cricket 2019

Seniors

With such a short window available this year for senior fixtures and some inclement weather it restricted the number of matches that were played. On paper it was a very youthful but talented side captained by Rob Hollinghurst. The highlights were a resounding 8 wicket victory over Bablake with Sachin Dubb top scoring with 91 not out and a nail biting Old Boys victory. The school team posted a competitive 172 with good contributions from Mithun Padmanabhan (52) and Ben Pagett. The Old Boys were cruising to victory until the introduction of Shailan Srikanthan in year 9. In tandem with Arjun Bala the spinners changed the game and the school team turned around an improbable victory with an 8 run winning margin.

Congratulations to leavers Stan Pigott, Nathan Lawrence, Dan Black and Rob Hollinghurst who have all been very committed to school cricket throughout their years at the school.

U’15’s

The U15’s had another winning season, finishing as runners-up in both the County Cup and Solihull 6’s. After a rain and exam delayed summer, the Warwickshire Cup was held at BVGS with semi-finals and final both being played on the same day. Vesey beat Warwick by 10-wickets in the semi, before losing to Solihull in the final by 5-wickets.

After good performances in the group at the Solihull 6’s and a semi-final victory over Solihull B’s, KES Birmingham proved too strong in the final winning by 5-wickets with 5-balls remaining.

Highlights were a 6-wicket victory over The XL club and a 62-run victory over Kings Worcester to end the season.
Oliver Gray-Nimmo was the star with the bat, scoring two 50’s and contributing vital runs in most other games. Arjun Bala was the pick of the bowlers and also showed improvements in his fielding and batting, culminating in a fantastic 78 against Kings Worcester.

U’14’s

The U14A had an unbeaten season across all formats. The stand out performance(s) came in the Solihull six a-side tournament where they were joint winners. On route to the final they achieved three group victories against Leicester GS, RGS Worcester and Solihull. In the semi-final they and turned a certain loss against Bablake School in to a brilliant victory. Sadly the final was washed out after BVGS had posted a very competitive score and had it not been for the inclement weather then they may have taken the title for themselves. Throughout the season it was commented on, that they were the best bowling unit, with a very balanced attack and were especially proactive and dynamic in their fielding. Every member of the squad made a pertinent contribution in at least one if not two games, which made this an especially impressive season.

U’13’s

The under 13s played a competitive years cricket. They performed admirable away at a tri tournament vs Warwick and KES Birmingham, whilst holding their own against touring side from Bradford Grammar school and Delhi. However, this season’s real victor was the weather, with 50% of the fixtures postponed or even cancelled. Stand out performances go to Aditya Muthukumar and Edward Bickley with the ball; Rohit Jakhu, our leading run scorer, with the bat. And their captain, Devin Fernando, whom continues to learn more and more about the many revolving difficulties of managing a cricket game.

U’12’s

Year 7 have had a fantastic cricket season with wins against Warwick School, Bablake, Kings Worcester and Queen Mary’s. Captained superbly by Kian Eratne who also contributed with bat on more than one occasion with some outstanding batting backed up by consistent and accurate bowling by a number of players including Kish Chaunhan, Oliver Brewin, Harry Moors, Ben Mostert, Kian Das and Jack Wadlow Smith.

Sports Leadership at Vesey’s

At Bishop Vesey’s, we pride ourselves on the diverse range of opportunities available to our students. They have the option to take part in a variety of sports, music and drama. However, our provision is not exclusive to our own students and this is exemplified through our sports partnership with Wilson Stuart School.

Through the Active Society scheme, Bishop Vesey’s have hosted 30 sports events this year for primary school children from across Sutton Coldfield and the surrounding area. There have been many different events throughout the year, as shown in the diagram. At all of these events, our students have acted as sports leaders. They have all done so with maturity and integrity at each event and have received a stream of positive feedback from teachers and parents alike. We are proud of that over 150 of our students have acted as sports leaders this year. Thank you to every one of them, whether they helped at just one event or whether they are in the leader board on the right!

In addition to the events hosted here, our young leaders have also been into the community, establishing and strengthening links with local clubs as they have hosted a further 8 events to give the participants an experience of alternative sporting environments. Our boys have refereed rugby at Veseyans RFC, overseen golf at Walmley GC and umpired tennis at Sutton Coldfield TC. We were also represented by 32 students at the Area Athletics at Wyndley, the pinnacle event in track and field for primary school students. Our boys were superb in their efficient, slick management of the event and again drew many compliments for their professional attitudes. At the time of writing, we are also preparing to support the final Primary School sports event in the Midlands, the prestigious ‘Summer Games’. It is great that over 1000 primary school boys and girls have benefitted from our provision and we hope to grow the scheme more and more in years to come!

As a reflection of our commitment to sports events and student leadership, we were recognised with the School Games Mark Silver Award for the 2018/19 academic year. The Silver award is the highest recognition we have received in the last decade and we are confident that next year we can go for Gold! The School Games Mark is a Government-led award scheme which rewards schools for developing participation and competition in sports across the community and so we are delighted to have been recognised.

PS: We had an amazing Sports Day on 1 July at Wyndley. Thank you to Mr Doughty and all the staff who made this possible.