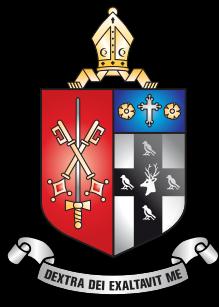


# 15:21

## MAGAZINE

THE ANNUAL STUDENT-LED, DEVELOPMENT OFFICE MAGAZINE



# THE UNTOLD STORY OF **KEN MILES**

SPRING 2020

## **Mr Robson's Opening Words**

Thank you for supporting Bishop Vesey and the Development Office initiative. Led by Brian Davies and Claire Bolton, the Development Office was set up three years ago to bolster the school's fundraising plans and connect with alumni.

Fast forward to the end of 2019, and the Development Office have 15 Interns: 12 Business focused Interns and 3 Charity Interns, who, hard alongside their Sixth Form studies, support the outreach and fundraising efforts the school undertakes.

We also have two Upper Sixth students, Benedict Newman and Samantha Hurst, who support the interns and have been instrumental in editing, collating and publishing the inaugural 15:27 magazine.

15:27 not only represents the year Bishop Vesey's Grammar School was founded, but also the end of the school day; a reminder that no matter how long ago you last heard the final school bell, you will always be welcome here as an Old Veseyan.

We hope this inspires you to continue to support the school and at the back of this magazine, we have included an events calendar of just a few of our business events, please keep up to date through our social platforms, and we hope to welcome you at BVGS in the near future.

**Dominic Robson**  
Headteacher



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# THE YEAR IN PHOTOS



The aim of the 'Vesey Experience' is to shape lives, inspire students, and motivate them to not only better themselves, but better the people around them.

With this in mind, how has being at Vesey affected our School Captains and what are they now doing to try and impact the local area? Furthermore, what has Dominic Robson put in place to try and develop the school and allow us to grow with our community?

School captain Alice Tinsley believes that "being part of Vesey means being part of a community working together to positively impact not only the lives of people we know but also the lives of people in the local area."

This has been done in the last twelve months with several staff members

and hundreds of students helping at countless events. One of which was the Boldmere Festival, where Veseyans helped by litter picking and aiding in the putting up and taking down of the many tents.

Another example of how the school have tried to impact the local community is through the Enrichment scheme. Sixth Form students have helped tutor younger pupils in nearby Primary Schools in order to prepare them for the 11+ exam. This highlights the effect that BVGS are having on the community in helping to provide better opportunities for the surrounding locals.

Joshua Russell extends upon this, saying "Many of our Sixth Formers do work in the local area, be it helping weekly at a care home, or volunteering at a primary school". This experience, and our relationship with the facilities who

## Reaching Out, Touching Me, Touching You

by Olly Curwen

allow us to do this, isn't just important to those looking to study medicine or healthcare, but it also offers our students perspective and allows them to nurture their people skills, which will stand them in good stead in the future.

This emphasises the fact our current Veseyans will never stop to aid the local community, and ensure that we can all be apart of something bigger than ourselves.

## What it means to be a DEVELOPMENT OFFICE INTERN

by Benedict Newman

3 years ago, the word Development Office would never have been spoken in association with Bishop Vesey's, and Brian Davies was a rugby coach, more interested in progress on the pitch rather than with the school's development.

Fast forward to today, the Development Office has over 30 Corporate Partners, 15 student Interns for both Charity and Business and works with staff all over the school.

The programme is unique for Independent Schools in the area as well as nationwide and, fortunately, we have been able to come along for the ride. It was the foresight of the now Development Director Brian Davies, who has allowed both of us, to have the experiences we have had.

In 2018, 12 students were chosen from an application and interview to work as student interns for a year, whilst in Lower Sixth. Moving into 2019 and both of us have continued into Upper Sixth with the programme, after our success in

our first year. It's worth mentioning, it's not been easy and it hasn't always been fun, but what it has done is taught us the nuances of business and management in a scenario which never would have happened years earlier.

But, the question remains, what does it mean to be an Intern? What does it mean to be working with the Development Office, and what has it taught us?

It's at least three hours a week in school of doing small tasks, on top of events roughly once every two weeks. It's going to the Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and speaking to businesses and selling the school and the programme.

It's a lot of the time doing behind the scenes, manual work which may not get noticed on the day of the event. But, most importantly, it's representing the school in the best light, to give back as a thank you for the foundation we have been given at BVGS.

It has, however, given us work experience, contacts and a boost for our CVs and applications for Universities, Apprenticeships and jobs. More importantly, we've really understood how prestigious being a student of Bishop Vesey's is.

The contacts we get, the events we see, the talks we have with Old Veseyans have all shown to us, that you may join BVGS in Year 7 or Year 12, but you never really leave.

You never really leave the passion for the school behind, and you never really leave the relationships you make with current and past students behind, and you certainly don't leave what you have learnt in lessons or out of lessons behind.

Perhaps this means the title should have been "What Does it Mean to be a Veseyan", but it's only through the Development Office that you can ever really understand that whilst still studying at Vesey. Pride, passion and hard work; that's what it means to work in the Development Office.

## BVGS Interns Get Connected!

The Intern Programme provides a framework for sixth form students preparing to leave school and enter the world of business. It provides the opportunities for students to learn new professional skills, explore new perspectives and gain practical work experience.

The programme aims to expose Interns to an array of business sectors and work cultures in a supervised environment while consolidating and enhancing their own skills set to complement their academic achievements, extra-curricular activities and life experiences.

### Why be an Intern?

- Learn about business cultures with small/medium sized companies as well as large corporate organisations
- Test out different business sectors as a way of honing your future career goals
- Gain general knowledge, insights and experience about business sectors through individual/team tasks and projects
- Get a real-world experience to help you develop and tailor your skills i.e. communications, business relationship management, critical thinking, practical problem-solving, team-work, leadership, promotions/marketing
- Explore opportunities for one-to-one mentoring or advice and guidance with business leaders
- Tap into existing business networks as a means of developing your own professional and business networks
- Develop commercial awareness which may be outside your chosen business sector focus
- Develop your CV with new skills and future references and testimonials to impress future employers

For more information please email Brian Davies at [b.davies@bishopvesseys.bham.sch.uk](mailto:b.davies@bishopvesseys.bham.sch.uk) or Claire Bolton (Development Office BVGS) at [c.bolton@bishopvesseys.bham.sch.uk](mailto:c.bolton@bishopvesseys.bham.sch.uk)

# Curtain up on Vesey Talent

by Jack Lees

Centrestage School of Speech and Drama in Sutton Coldfield, which was opened by Rebekah O'Dowd in January 2002, has been working religiously with Bishop Vesey students since 2015; recently completing their ninth production with the school in July this year.

With the support of Rebekah and the Centrestage team, students have had the exciting opportunity of performing in front of friends and family in an array of compelling dramas and comedies - as well as being able to take part in LAMDA speech lessons.

The first production, 'Two', was performed by a cast of twelve sixth form students in December 2015, which was then followed by two more productions, 'Ernie's Incredible Illucinations' and 'The Game'. The latter, in fact, was performed at the 2016 Lichfield Festival's 'Poppies Concert' - something both Centrestage and Bishop Vesey were immensely proud of.



These successes were then followed by the senior play 'Find Me' by Olwen Wymark in December 2016, which gave students the opportunity to explore a true story, following a girl's tumultuous struggles with mental health.

In 2017, years 7-9 performed their first full length production 'Toad' and a year later, BVGS and Centrestage ran a play of two halves: the first 'Living with Lady Macbeth', and the second, an hour long version of Shakespeare's Macbeth.

The Lower years then had their own Shakespearean production in July 2018, performing their own modern-day take on 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', performed on the school cricket grounds on a sunny afternoon with family and friends enjoying their picnics at the same time.

The most recent play was 'Jabberwocky', a humorous fantasy romp based on the Lewis Carroll poem from Alice through the Looking Glass. This was a true representation of the success of the Centrestage programme, as the 14 actors we had back in 2016, have since risen to a cast of over 40 students.

Furthermore, Centrestage continue to have a considerable presence within the Vesey community, continuing speech lessons and Monday lunchtime drama workshops, with the aspiration for a 2020 senior production before the Easter break.

If you would like to support or watch any of the BVGS productions, please follow our twitter page and alumni platform for more details about our upcoming productions.

## BISHOP VESEY'S CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP



The Bishop Vesey's Grammar School Corporate Partnership works to support the school, while offering its members a free networking forum to promote their services and collaborate with other local organisations.



Hosting regular networking events throughout the year, with special guest speaker appearances from successful industry figures, the initiative delivers important insights that are relevant to businesses in every sector.

With new members throwing their support behind the partnership each month, there is an opportunity for businesses to build lasting relationships with one another and collaborate on future projects.

If you are interested in joining the Corporate Partnership and would like more information on how to register your support, contact Claire Bolton at [c.bolton@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk](mailto:c.bolton@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk).



# THE UNTOLD STORY OF KEN MILES

Recently, we discovered that Ken Miles (OV 1935) and his story was to be played by Christian Bale alongside Matt Damon in the new Hollywood film Le Mans '66 (Ford V Ferrari).

Without spoiling too much of the story which was released on November 15th, Le Mans '66 was a story following American automotive giant Ford and their failed attempted purchase of competitor Ferrari. In the aftermath, and as a result of bitterness between the two businesses, Ford went on to produce a brand-new car in order to embarrass Ferrari; test driven by Bishop Vesey's own Ken Miles.

Born in Sutton Coldfield in 1916, Miles raced motorcycles before serving as a tank commander in the British Army in WW2. Post War he raced some of today's most infamous automotive brands such as Bugattis, Alfa Romeos and Alvises, with Vintage Sports Car Club, before turning to a Ford V8 Fraser-Nash. By 1935, Miles won his first race in the US, at Pebble Beach, and won every race in the under 1500cc class that year, before going on to drive numerous other cars until the late 1950s.

Following the death of Walt Hansgen in a Mk.11 Ford, the executive decision was made to shelve the car for the remainder of the 1966 World Sports Car Championship Season. In August 1966, Shelby American resumed testing and development work, with Miles serving as the primary test driver.

Following a long day of testing in the Southern California Heat, Miles approached the end of the track's 1-mile downhill back straight, at top speed (over 200 mph) when the car suddenly looped, flipped, crashed and caught fire. The car subsequently broke into pieces and ejected Miles – killing him instantly as he left behind his wife Mollie and son Peter.

Ken's brother paid tribute in the school's magazine, describing him as "always doing anything better than I could and knowing more than anyone else, demanding the impossible", and it was this quote which resonated with members of the school community. As Vesey students, we are still encouraged to strive for excellence and push our own boundaries of what we believe is possible – just like Ken Miles did all those years ago. Ken was inducted into the Motorsport Hall of Fame of America in 2001 as a recognition of all he did and the legacy he left. It was, in fact, because of Ken's death that strict Health and Safety regulations have been put in place and steel cages have subsequently been installed on circuits to protect drivers.

More modern-day sporting successes, such as Hamish Carter, have caught the attention of the school community, to offer inspiration for all Veseyans however it is the stories which have been lost through time (such as Ken Miles') which we would like to retell and make record of too. If you are aware of any Old Veseyans with interesting stories or pasts, be it in sport or any other aspects of life please get in touch with the Development Office team so we can recognise them in future 15:27 issues.



written by Harry Mills & Holly Horn



## RAISING THE (HIGH) BAR FOR VESEY ATHLETES

by Benedict Newman

Another one of our sporting alumni is the Commonwealth Games Bronze Medallist Hamish Carter who, along with his brother Angus, joined the school in 2012 and completed his GCSEs and A Levels.

Hamish started competing in gymnastics whilst living in Nottingham, winning the county championships annually and was since selected for the Elite Performance Squad.

We interviewed him about his sporting success and BVGS' part in allowing him to progress and reach his potential.

### How was your experience of the 2018 Commonwealth Games?

"It might sound a bit cliché, but it seriously was the best month of my life. I enjoyed the entire experience, from the competing, to the downtime and meeting the other athletes. From a personal perspective, I was able to deliver my best ever routines in front a huge audience, which was a massive achievement"

### How did it feel to win a medal at the games?

We knew coming into the games that it wouldn't be easy and that to finish on the podium we would have to bring our best performance. As we came to the last stage of the event we were neck and neck with Cyprus for the bronze medal, so we knew we had to nail the final floor routine in order to secure third place.

Thankfully, we put on a fantastic display and we were all elated to win the medal and make up for the smaller mistakes we had made earlier in the competition.

### Do you think your time at Bishop Vesey's has helped you find success?

Massively, the school has been crucial to my success and have supported me throughout the years of training. They allowed me to miss a third of the academic year for five years straight and



would send my work to me 2-3 weeks in advance so that I could keep on top of my studies while on the road.

When I was at the school, they also provided additional workspace and gave me the tutoring I needed to achieve my grades, while allowing me to invest the time my sport required.

### What is your fondest memory from you time at BVGS?

That's a tricky one, but there's probably two that stick out in my mind more than most. The first one being our last day of Sixth Form when we all got dressed up and had a great time celebrating with friends.

The second is probably the day I opened my A Level results via email and realised I'd achieved three B's, which was obviously a fantastic achievement for myself and the school, considering all the distractions of training and travelling to competitions.

### Finally, what advice would you give to other students who have dreams of becoming a professional sportsperson or athlete?

If someone is in a position where they are serious about competing or are passionate about a particular sport, then I'd seriously tell them to pursue it while they're still young.

Professional sport takes its toll on you, so it is important that you start working towards your goal as early as you can to give yourself the best chance possible.

I have learnt so many transferable life skills since taking up gymnastics, and it has presented me with a number of fantastic opportunities that I wouldn't have been able to get otherwise. If you are serious about sport, then truly commit yourself to the cause and work hard to achieve your dreams.

# THE WINTER SPORT UPDATE

by Beth Winterbottom

As with all Autumn terms at BVGS, it's been an action-packed start to the sporting year, which has seen the new Year 7s try their hand at hockey and rugby, and the Sixth Form girls try and build on a successive first year as members of the 'Vesey Vultures'.

Starting with rugby, there have been wins across the board, from the 12D team all the way to the 1st XV, with some especially large margins. In early October, the 3rd XV beat King Edward VI's Stratford 53-0 captained by Dylan Lindford (Year 11) and the following week, the 1st XV played two huge games.

The first, against St Peter's RC Gloucester the score was 46-7, and the inaugural game against Welsh School 'The Crypt'. There have been some fantastic performances in the 1st Team, from Clarke Wells and Harry Mills (L6) and David Thomas, Oliver Lillycrop and Matthew Hurley (U6) who will all look to make a final impression in their last year at Bishop Vesey.

On 11th October the Vesey Vultures, our Girls' rugby team played for the

first time this year, against King Henry VIII School, Coventry. Although they lost 22-35, they showed true grit and their set pieces were excellent. Captained by Georgia Lane (U6), the team have only been training together since September when the new lower sixth girls joined, so they will use this first game to improve and gain experience, to come back fighting after half term.

The hockey teams this half term have also put in some solid performances. The first teams suffered some losses against King Edward's School, Birmingham, in the first week of half term but since then the 1st XI, captained by Benjamin Ellis (U6),

beat Loughborough Grammar School 4-0 and Adams Grammar School 8-0. The 2nd XI scored 3-0 against King Edward VI Five Ways School and won 4-2 against Queen Mary's Grammar School.

Lower down the school, the U14 players have displayed some superb skills in their weekly games, with frequent goals scorers being Toby Varley (Year 9) and Finley Patterson (Year 9).



## Vesey's Motorsport Track Record

by Olly Curwen

Bishop Vesey seemingly has a hidden past of motorsport, beyond just Ken Miles, and so our Lower Sixth Interns have been attempting to uncover these stories as great examples of how BVGS can contribute to enriching our student's lives in and out of the classroom.

One ex-student, is Scott Mansell: a double EuroBOSS Champion and the 2015 Radical UK Champion. The other, is current Year 8 student Ryan Cartwright who has just began his motorsport journey.

Scott Mansell was inspired by his father

(Kevin Mansell not Nigel) who was also a motorsport enthusiast and professional.

Beginning racing at age 8, Scott honed his skills whilst at BVGS and began racing professionally at the age of just 18 years and 4 days, going on to win the European Championship – something previously unthought of for such a new racer on the circuit.

This inevitably led to Scott's title the following year, 2004, of BBC Midlands Young Sportsman of the Year, and nomination for the Autosport Club Driver of the Year Award.

Since September the netball teams have been training hard every Monday and Wednesday. Despite some close games, the first win came for the U18A team, led by Neve Parkes (U6) on 23rd October against Adams Grammar School, with our team winning 31-17. After half term, the first two teams will compete in a tournament at King Edward VI High School for Girls.

Our senior cross-country team have had an outstanding half term, with a team win at Crackley Woods in Kenilworth in early September and a second and fourth place at the annual Pairs Race held in Sutton Park on 9th October.

Showing pure determination, strength and speed for the past two months, congratulations to the whole team: Alex Stapleton, Laurie Barratt, Nathan Casey, Ben Roberts, Oliver Newbould and Joe McClafferty.

If you would like to support Bishop Vesey sport, please follow our twitter page for updates on results, as well as our website for fixtures.

With a strong vision for his future, Mansell still managed to achieve his A-Level grades whilst at Vesey, as do so many of our sporting successes, and has since gone on to do great things like setting up his own automotive company: Driver 61.

Driver 61 was inspired by Scott and his father's career in motorsport, working all over the world as a resource for drivers to improve their performance. This has been Scott's passion for over 4 years since founding the company in October 2015.

# 2019 RUGBY TOUR

## JAPAN & SINGAPORE

by Fraser Bell



**A**rriving in Singapore was a drastic change from the streets of Birmingham, with skyscrapers and architectural masterpieces embedded throughout the country.

After catching up on some well-needed sleep, we visited the prestigious Singapore cricket club for a civilised meal before taking in the breath-taking views of downtown Singapore from the terrace. The following morning, both Under 16

and 1st XV teams travelled to Sentosa island (a British military base turned tourist island) in order to let off some steam and relax on the beach before a busy day ahead.

We were given the opportunity of going up the infamous Marina Bay Sands building offering views of the F1 track, sports stadium and stunning skyline.



The first set of fixtures were held this evening against Singapore's Oldham school in which both Vesey under 16's and 1st XV put on impressive performances to defeat Oldham 27-5 in both matches to take a two to nil lead in the series of matches.

Upon arrival in Japan, both teams journeyed to the mountainous and rugby-centred village of Sugadeira,



on the way visiting the Jigokudani monkey park and walking amongst Japan's snow monkeys.

The following day, the under 16's played a strong, travelling Urawa Grammar School team and put in a tireless and brave performance with a Clark Wells hat-trick leading them to a last second victory described by Mr Whiting as the 'best under 16's match he's witnessed'. The under 18's also put on a masterclass, displacing Daito Bunka High School 57-12 with both David Thomas and Seb Smith scoring two tries each.

Next up was the cultural city of Kyoto where they experienced the Daigoji temple complex with Japan's oldest wooden

temple before kayaking on Japan's largest lake - Lake Biwa.



The third set of fixtures proved to be the toughest against Kyoto Kogakuen High School who outclassed the Vesey boys, defeating the under 16's 50-7 and the under 18's 74-7.

Afterwards, the first round of hosting began with the schoolboys and their families for two nights which was, to many, the most memorable and priceless experiences; giving a taste of the Japanese culture through traditional Japanese tea ceremony and calligraphy lessons.

The tour then advanced to Hiroshima through a journey on the bullet train, visiting the powerful Hiroshima memorial museum which put into reality the devastation caused during World War Two.

The penultimate fixture was a combined under 18 and 16 side against Miyajima Technical High School with Vesey coming out victorious, winning 19-0. Following the match, the opposing school gave a tour around their grounds, before going on to visit the Miyajima island, viewing the Great Torii Gate and making lifelong friends.

The final leg of the tour was spent in Tokyo with half of the boys being hosted, enjoying the wealthier cultural side of Japan in Tokyo skyline apartments. The others enjoyed a baseball match between Hiroshima and Tokyo at the Tokyo dome with an atmosphere on par with a Premier League match!

This culturally enriching and unforgettable tour was capped off with an amazing final set of fixtures against Kokugakuin High School where the under 16's won 36-10 and the under 18's 21-12, meaning the touring group won the series of matches 7-2.

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# The Learning Resource Centre

by Charlie Richards

The school requires an extension to fit the large influx of pupils to enter in the coming years, so here we wish to construct a new building: The Learning Resource Centre. The idea is to extend the school site to not only meet the needs of the sixth form but ease the pressures on the lower school too, and hopefully, following a successful Government bid, planning and fundraising will commence after Christmas.

The LRC will firstly aim to create a new social area for the school, where students can chat and network in a communal space, a place to withdraw from the stress of exams during break, lunch and after school. This is needed from a social perspective, where areas of limited and demanded space like the common room, canteen and hub can now be focused on more study-based activities.

Academically, the LRC will provide a release from the stress of the hub and hive, whilst also potentially including a library for sixth form only; being beneficial closer to exam season when people will require spaces where people will wish to revise. This building could offer a plethora of different benefits for both the school life day in and day out, as well as the ethos and reputation of the school.

From a business perspective, the LRC offers more capacity at the school, as well as more event possibilities due to this added, usable space. Through increasing the school's facilities and proving to OVs and prospective parents that our school is thriving, the school will receive more publicity; allowing for more partnerships to be formed wherever possible.

Not only will this new block benefit the higher years at BVGS; it will simultaneously provide more space for the lower years to expand and not worry about having limited access to certain areas of the school.

The economic impact of the build does not, however, outweigh the positive changes which could be created, if the block is to new used in the correct way. A hub for both social and educational activities, an area full of hope and aspiration and success.

So, the Learning Resource Centre is a gateway to a positive development of the school where a more professional and focused atmosphere could benefit the students, staff and community equally.

If you would like to support the LRC and our fundraising efforts, please contact Development Director Brian Davies, or keep in touch through the school's LinkedIn and Twitter profiles.

## VESEY'S CHARITABLE CHARGE

by Elijah Nix

Charity has always been a vital part of the Vesey experience and is heavily integrated into the lives of students here at BVGS but, this year, with Brian Davies taking over as Head of Charity, we're looking to do even more in 2019/20.

Along with the Development Office Interns, charity interns have been allocated to support new Charity Officer Ellen Concannon and her team with raising money, bringing fresh ideas and ways to raise more money for more charities.

Amongst new proposals is the "Giving Tree" initiative, where a Christmas Tree will be placed, with baubles hanging off

stating what individuals need such as nappies or socks. These items can be bought and placed under the tree by members of the public, and distributed on Christmas Eve.

In addition, each of Vesey's 6 Houses has undertaken a charity to represent and support over the course of the next year: Blue House have chosen Papyrus, Emerald House have Unicef, Gold House will raise money for Stand Up To Cancer, Purple House have chosen Teenage Cancer Trust, Red House have chosen British Heart Foundation, whilst White House have chosen Cancer Research UK.

Ellen Concannon, has been working with the charity officers and charity interns to produce ideas for these houses to raise funds individually, whilst also working to support other charities such as the Macmillan bake sale, "Jeans for Genes" and wear red day for "Show Racism the Red Card", which were all included in the first half term.

The new charity team aim to make charity a "more active and integrated part of 'The Vesey Experience' for everyone" and "create a larger sense of community around the charity program in the school", but most importantly, aim to give back to those more disadvantaged than ourselves.



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# Sustaining Vesey For The Future

With the future of our environment appearing to fall on a younger and younger generation, with the rise of Greta Thunberg and the youth activists, BVGS has given Seb Smith and Lily Wood, the inaugural role as Environmental Officers.

New Development Office Intern, Olivia Sheargold spoke to the both of them about the school's switch to being Eco-Friendly.

## What are the roles of Environment Officers?

The main role of Environment Officers is to run the new eco-team created within school, containing members in years 7 to 13. We've met with Dominic Robson and Graham Swindells as well as Geography teacher Ian Bousfield to find ways where we can make our school more sustainable and hopefully gain 'eco-school' certification.

## What have officers done recently and what are their future plans?

We like to think we've set good foundations at the start of the year, raising awareness of environmental issues, we've both presented an assembly to students, in keeping with World Environmental Health Day on September 26th to educate all students about the science behind new environmental initiatives.

[Seb] presented tips for staff as well as students, on how best to reduce their carbon footprint: like an International Walk to School Month and using Ecosia as an alternative greener search engine.

Away from education, we've implemented a ban on single-use plastics; encouraging students to bring refillable bottles to school and have encouraged the kitchen staff to promote the use of plates and metal cutlery instead of disposable boxes and plastic knives/forks.'

## What we can do as individuals?

In school, away from school, one change to make that will have a considerable impact is reducing the amount of meat we consume.

In school, however, we've already tried to implement this with our new meat-free Mondays initiative in our canteen - an alternative to going vegetarian.

Finally, students can make use of paper recycling bins in classrooms as well as plastic recycling on the pavilion and in the playground.



by Olivia Sheargold L6v

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# SOMETHING OLD SOMETHING NEW

by Dorna Hamed Barghi

In the spirit of mixing current Veseyans, and their stories, with our Old Veseyans, we spoke to Geoff Bolton (OV 1972) about how he found his time at BVGS, as well as new siblings Beth (L6) and Elliot (Y7) Winterbottom. You'll see some interesting comparisons between the three reports.

Beth speaks fondly about her passion for her subjects and integration with her own year as well as others, Elliot seems enthusiastic about being picked for the hockey team whereas Geoff seems to look back at the rules and regulations imposed by teachers and older pupils alike.

During Geoff's tenure at Vesey, there were no female teachers (let alone students), but in their place, ex WW2 or Korean War soldiers who, he recollects, were "stricter than the younger teachers". Along the theme of discipline, there was good reason to be strict seeing as teenage rebellion was rife, but even if the "chalk and talk" teaching style has been replaced, what has maintained is the emphasis on

success in sport as well as academia. A somewhat outdated teaching style was to be expected; however, Vesey does have a reputation of consistently preparing students for the wider world. It is worth mentioning, that despite some of Geoff's clearest memories being away from his lessons, he did go on to become an English teacher, though its his passion for Geography which he draws on today, running successful wine tasting sessions. That said, Geoff admitted back in school, he didn't quite have the "responsible attitude" (his words) that a model student may demonstrate today.

Back in the 1970s there were not the pressures in school success and finding a career that younger people have today, but Geoff describes himself as a "voracious reader with a good memory and an enquiring mind" and attributes BVGS to encouraging those qualities.

Going back to outdated punishments, after hearing Geoff it is clear that the teacher-pupil relationship is a lot closer

and more nurturing. Not only has corporal punishment been banned for over 20 years, but teachers now rarely get the attention of their students by surname alone which Geoff said was commonplace back in his time.

This nurturing side to Vesey has gone into the students and their relationship with each other, as Geoff recollects his experience with the older years not being as inclusive as it is today, where there is more fluidity between years and their interactions.

All jokes aside, Vesey has changed indescribably over the last 50 or so years. Rugby pitches acquired in the 1980s, an AstroTurf which was built just under a decade ago, the new music block, Richards-Randon Stem block and more construction plans are yet to come. But two things do seem apparent. Firstly, Vesey pupils remain well prepared for life when they leave – not only in academia but also life skills. The second, no matter what happens during your time here, you can always look back on the fondest memories and most pertinent lessons.

It seems a bit of a coincidence that both myself and my brother have started at BVGS this year; him in Year 7 and me in Year 12.

Like most of the Year 7s I'm sure, Elliot admits he wasn't quite sure what to expect of Big School, but as I came from an all girls' school, I was slightly more aware of how a Secondary School might run.

Even though Elliott's perception of "Big School" isn't quite as daunting as he first perceived, he's still felt the massive differences between here and his primary school, and I too have noticed differences between an all-girls school to a mixed sixth form.

Both of us have benefited from the exceptional sports facilities the school has to offer, with Elliot being in the hockey team and myself picked for the netball team. We have both enjoyed making new friends, which is always tricky, but Vesey is well-versed to helping all students find their place.

In the classroom, I'm loving my three A Level subjects, and Elliot likes the fact that he can learn lots of different things in much greater detail than he has before.

by Beth Winterbottom

Of course, as with any big moves, there have been some big changes we have taken a bit of time to grow accustomed to.

The walk to school is more arduous than I first anticipated (Elliott has given up all together and is now taking the bus), and of course the natural step up to A Levels and Secondary School in general is a big leap.

Elliott often says he feels like he's gone from being 'a big fish in a small pond, to a really small fish in a really big pond', but Vesey seems to have a different dynamic to elsewhere. It doesn't just teach the syllabus, but also life lessons – in lower school as well as 6th Form.

So, after our first half term at Bishop Vesey's, both my brother and I feel we have become more independent and adaptable to change, whilst also learning and thriving in a different environment.

I am now a Development Office Intern and he now is settled with his teachers and friends, but both of us feel welcomed into BVGS and now consider ourselves as true Veseyans.

# UPCOMING EVENTS



**Business Social**  
Date: Wednesday 15 January 2020  
Time: 6pm – 8pm  
Venue: Millennium Point

A new social “drop-in” event where the time is your own to mingle informally with existing contacts and meet new business people in a convivial environment. A Birmingham business leader will join us and will provide their perspective on the continuing dynamism of Birmingham’s business ambitions and growth.



**Six Nations “Warm up”**  
Date: Friday 31 January 2020  
Time: 7pm – 11pm  
Venue: BVGS

A chance for you to assemble, enjoy a three course dinner and make your predictions for the Six Nations tournament which kicks-off on the following day, 1 February.

Our guest speaker is Robert Jones MBE who started out as a school boy international at both Cricket and Rugby. At 17 he was invited to join Swansea Rugby Club where his senior career started. He was capped 54 times for Wales and represented the British Lions and Barbarians during his 17 year playing career, before going on to a successful media career with the BBC and S4C as a television pundit and commentator.



**BVGS Jobs and Careers Fair**  
Date: Friday 7 February 2020  
Time: 9am – 12pm  
Venue: BVGS Sports Hall

An annual event which is growing significantly each year with over fifty companies showcasing their business sectors and future, diverse career opportunities. A combination of guest speakers, seminars and exhibition stalls open up windows of opportunity in Finance and Banking; IT and Technologies; Business; Law; Construction, Development, Engineering and Environment, Medicine/Health care.



**Roaring Twenties Lunch**  
Date: Wednesday 4 March 2020  
Time: 10.30am – 3pm  
Venue: Moor Hall Hotel & Spa

A nostalgic trip back to the glamorous 1920s as a setting for our popular annual lunch. Drinks reception, two course meal, Fashion Show by Obsessions, Streetly Village and premium shopping available throughout the day.



**Texas Golf Scramble & Business Social**  
Date: Wednesday 25 March 2020  
Time: Golf (2.30pm – 5pm) Business Social (6pm – 8pm)  
Venue: Walmley Golf Club

A fast and furiously fun round of Texas-style golf followed by a calming, social “drop-in” event where the time is your own to mingle informally with existing contacts and meet new business people in a convivial environment.



**Cocktails and Mocktails Business Social**  
Date: Wednesday 13 May 2020  
Time: 6pm – 8pm  
Venue: Pop Up Pub at Bishop Vesey Grammar School

A social “drop-in” event sampling alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. The time is your own to mingle informally with existing contacts and meet new business people in a convivial environment.



**BVGS Golf Day**  
Date: Friday 5 June 2020  
Time: 11.30am – 8pm  
Venue: Walmley Golf Club

A competitive game of golf in fours with spot prizes and goody bags finishing with a supper swapping tales about those memorable Birdies, Eagles and Albatrosses!



**Old Veseyans Sports Reunion**  
Date: Saturday 20 June 2020  
Time: 12 noon – 6pm  
Venue: BVGS

A sporting feast of competitive fixtures between BVGS students v Old Veseyans throughout the day which includes squash, cross-country, hockey, cricket, rugby, netball and tennis.



**Old Veseyans Music Night**  
Date: Saturday 20 June 2020  
Time: 7pm – 9.30pm  
Venue: BVGS

A cultural and social evening of musical performances by existing students and Alumni showcasing their individual and ensemble talents and skills.



**BVGS Senior Art Exhibition**  
Date: Thursday 2 July and Friday 3 July 2020  
Time: 6pm – 8pm  
Venue: Argentea Gallery, St Paul's Square

An informal social mingle with existing and new business contacts, students, staff, parents and BVGS ambassadors while viewing imaginative and creative art work.



**Annual Business BBQ**  
Date: Thursday 9 July 2020  
Time: 6pm – 8pm  
Venue: BVGS

Enjoy a relaxed annual Summer barbecue sharing good food, drink and conversations with other business people.

## BVGS On TV

As a School, BVGS is committed to social mobility. We have had a fairer admissions policy in place for Year 7 (since 2017) and Sixth Form (since 2016). BVGS have been working with Washwood Heath Academy and St John Wall.

BVGS was featured recently in a BBC2 programme ‘Growing up Gifted’ (February 2019), who were following a student from St John Wall secondary school in Handsworth who would like to attend Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School Sixth Form.

## QEHB Christmas Donations

BVGS students, guided by Naima Field (Head of Year 11), donated over 100 Christmas presents in December to Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham Charity to distribute to patients and staff who were in hospital or working over the Christmas period, inspired by the school’s previous Easter Egg appeal earlier in 2018.

## Children with Cancer Charity Event

On Monday 4th February, one of last year’s Upper Sixth students, Hamzah Mahmood, led the fund-raising for a non-uniform day for Children with Cancer.

In preparation, Hamzah spoke in very moving assemblies the previous week about his little sister, Laraib, and her fight against a very rare form of cancer (acute lymphoblastic leukaemia with ABL2 translocation). The whole School came together and raised £2,000.

## Millennium Point Charitable Trust Donation

Due to the generous donation of over £21,000 from Birmingham’s Millennium Point Trust to the Design and Robotics Club at BVGS, the school has been able to open a new robotics lab and 3D printing facility.

From September, students have been able to gain experience, knowledge and skills in advanced technology. We were able to showcase the STEM equipment on the 15th May to BBC Midlands Today.



## #IStandWithAnne

On June 12th, a group of Anne Frank ambassadors from BVGS went to Westminster on what would have been Anne Frank’s 90th birthday. The event was attended by Eva Schloss, Anne’s step sister, and The Right Hon MP for Housing where the need to fight hate and discrimination was discussed. BVGS were very proud to be a part of this.

# Remembering Peter Randon

(04.03.40 - 03.07.19)

by Benedict Newman

**In the seven years I have been at BVGS, I never got the opportunity to speak to Peter Randon, however I did have the pleasure of performing in front of him quite a few times at various music concerts and events.**

Despite never speaking directly to him, all Veseyans, current or past, are aware of Peter Randon and the great things he has done for Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School.

Be it umpiring for cricket, or donating considerably for the Richards-Randon Stem Block along with Clive Richards, Peter Randon clearly was the epitome of what it meant to be a Veseyan.

Through the kind donations of both time and money, Peter Randon has changed this school dramatically. He was editor of the OVA Magazine for over 30 years, a BVGS Governor for 23 years and Chairman of the Governors for 18 of

those years.

During his tenure on the Governing board, Vesey appointed its first female Headteacher, Marie Clarke, built the Randon Centre, Sports Hall and the Clive Richards Music Centre.

All who were lucky enough to know him personally, knew him as a charismatic leader, who formed the school’s modern policy and practice.

Away from Bishop Vesey, Peter founded his own company, offering jobs to over 50 employees and turning over in excess of seven million pounds.

He was also a magistrate on the Aldridge and Walsall Bench – once more showing his commitment to supporting and

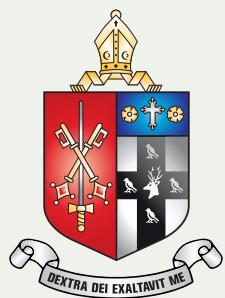


transforming communities.

Both him and his wife Sheila, have given so much to the school, and the Randon family have been well embedded within BVGS for many years; with Peter’s Father being the ex-1st team Rugby Captain.

Sheila continues to help the school, kindly hosting the Shaggy Dogs Tea Party in June of last year and supporting at concerts and other events the school puts on.

Peter Randon was and still is an inspiration for all students, teachers and past alumni. The school hosted a memorial service, attended by over 200 people including some of Sheila and Peter’s extended family, on the 16th October of this year.



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