



PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD
ON MONDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2016 IN THE NEWMAN HALL

The meeting opened with current student Emily Tyers sharing some of her experiences from a trip to Indonesia to work with Operation Wallacea.

1. Committee's Welcome
Paula Roberts welcomed Head Teacher Mary Utton and the members attending. She thanked those who had travelled some distance to attend. She thanked Emily for her interesting and entertaining presentation, which gave members an insight into some of the opportunities now available to students attending the school. and said she would welcome feedback on the buffet.
2. Apologies
Apologies were received from several members for a variety of reasons.
3. Minutes of the AGM 2015
Copies of the Minutes were displayed on each table. These were accepted as a true record, proposed by Deirdre Harvey, seconded by Judy Roughton, all agreed.
4. Matters Arising
Concerns were raised last year about the temperature in the Newman Hall and the difficulty some members had in hearing the speakers. A sound system has been made available and the heating adjusted during PHSA events. We have continued to operate as a team on the committee and there will be an opportunity later in the meeting for members to vote on the committee for the coming year.
5. Chairman's Report
Paula Roberts delivered the report on behalf of the committee. The annual dinner was held at the school for the first time, with students providing the catering and front of house services. It was a great success. Some of the money raised has contributed to the cost of a new cooker for the school. Thanks go to Mary Utton and Jane Hill. Members are requested to respect the table place settings at any future events in order to assist the girls waiting at tables. Please use the response forms to request any preferred seating arrangements so that the committee can take this into account when planning the tables. The summer social was also a success this year and we were delighted to welcome many new members. This year's prizes from the PHSA were awarded to: Laura Selwood We have asked Mary to let us know of any forthcoming projects that the Association could support with a donation. Later in the meeting we will be requesting nominations for a Committee Chair and any other committee members. We will also be proposing the election of a representative from the current school staff, Shellie Joynes, who has already been a tremendous support to us over the past year. We mentioned at the last AGM that we had been struggling to keep the website up to date. We have now set up a members' Facebook page, which is much easier to manage ourselves. Thanks to Shellie Joynes for setting this up. If you would like to be included in the group, please let Shellie, Heather or Paula know.

6. Head Teacher's Remarks

Good evening. As always, I'm delighted to be here this evening. Can you believe it! I'm coming to the end of my 9th year of Headship here at this wonderful school and continue to feel very privileged to work with our outstanding students who, generally speaking, get it right!

It's always good to get positive feedback from parents and I received a lovely card from a parent whose daughter left us this summer to go onto University and what she wrote I think sums up what is so special about PHSG.

"I wanted to write to you to express my gratitude for all that PHSG has done for my daughter over the last seven years. Since week one, she has been so happy at school, academically has achieved so much and has made friends that I genuinely feel will be for life. From a Parent's point of view, I have to congratulate you and your wonderful staff for supporting, motivating and caring for her as an individual rather than just a numbered student passing through. My daughter has been exceedingly fortunate to have always had amazing teachers and everyone in the school has a true vocation. I am very proud of the young woman that my daughter has become at Plymouth High, yourself and all the amazing staff have played a huge part in her development."

I am fearful at the way education is going in this country. We continue to be bombarded with change. Currently we are dealing with changes to GCSE and A Level syllabi as well as a new assessment system at Key Stage 3 and a new grading system at GCSE as grades go from letters to numbers. This is along with the Government's push to academize schools though they have dropped the compulsory element of this, and to encourage us to join in with other schools to form a MAT - a multi academy trust. All this is happening at a time of decreasing budgets when our only option is to reduce the curriculum offer so it's not as broad and balanced, and to cut staffing.

Despite these pressures we continue to deliver an exceptional education for our young people. Let me start first of all with this year's A Level and GCSE results.

At A level we need to congratulate the students on their outstanding successes. The overall pass rate for A2 exams was 99.3% with 83.5% A* to C and 56.4% A* to B. This again shows an improvement on last year's results particularly at the top end. Our students were also successful getting into the Universities of their choice including Oxford and the Russell group universities. Turning now to GCSE results. This was an interesting year group and it was a year where the 11+ entry score had been lower than for previous years. This year 95.8% achieved at least five or more GCSE subjects at grades A* - C including English and mathematics. The number of girls gaining 5 or more A* - A grades was 35%. This year sees a new measure which is called Progress 8 which was just slightly negative at -0.05 with both progress in Maths and English being positive.

We have just finished collating student questionnaires in which we asked students to give us feedback on whether they feel happy and safe at school and whether they think PHSG is a good school. In Years 7 to 9 the response is overwhelmingly positive being above 90%. This drops down slightly in Years 10 and 11 and rises again in the Sixth Form which is what we would expect. This is the same when we asked the question "Are you well supported in your academic work?"

I am determined that this school remains one of opportunity. It is so often the learning that takes place outside the curriculum that students will remember. For that reason I continue to encourage and support the range of extra-curricular activities and enrichment experiences. Just over the past few months I have had students taking part in:

- Science research in Indonesia
- Team Hummingbird with our Formula 24 racing car continuing to hold its own against the opposition
- A range of in school, day trips and residential activities such as London Theatre trip, Adventure International, Isles of Scilly, Arts and Crafts, Surfing and Play in a Week during Curriculum Enrichment Week
- October half term saw Key Stage 3 students visiting the First World War Battlefields led by the History Department.
- Girls are practicing for the Magistrates Competition and the Bar Mock competition.
- Duke of Edinburgh

The girls come back from these experiences reminiscing on what they have learnt; learning to mix with students from different years and Houses, interacting with members of the public, building self-confidence, developing their creativity, problem solving, being taken out of their comfort zone by trying something completely new and thereby showing their resilience, their leadership skills. I could go on, and as always I remain immensely proud of our girls and boys, their achievements and determination to succeed.

I am also pleased to announce that we have just won another prestigious award. We have gained the Gold Sports Mark which very few schools manage to achieve. This relies on our girls going out to other schools to help with Sport and fitness. This award also links into our work to achieve the Healthy Schools Mark which is a Plymouth LA quality assurance award, and also our work on Wellbeing across the school.

I would like to thank you so much for your very generous donation of £500. We were going to spend this on the canteen notice boards. However the girls have used a small notice board that was already there for their display and have changed their minds about an upright board to separate off an area for the older students due to the limited space. We hope you agree therefore that it was a good idea to spend the money on enhancing the study facilities in the Sixth Form Common Room. We have removed most of the old tatty settees and installed round tables and chairs.

It is with sadness that we heard of Mary Hooker's death. She had been such a support to PHSG. She always had our best interests at heart and gave many years of excellent service to the Governing Body. She will be missed.

It only leaves me to thank you once again for inviting me to join you and be part of your AGM this evening.

7. Treasurer's Report

A copy of the figures was available on each table, showing a closing balance of £1001.96. Jennie noted that this was a healthy balance and that we would be making a donation of £600 to the school. Jennie thanked everyone again for their generosity in buying raffle tickets and donating prizes as this makes a great contribution to our funds.

8. Membership Secretary's Report

Laura Mitchell gave the Membership Secretary's report.

Current active members: 226 (including Mary Utton and David Jowett)

Mary Hooker and Doreen Johnson died earlier this year, both of whom had supported the school over many years.

Jean Christie and Joan Dugga have asked to be removed from the database as they are no longer able to be active members.

New members: Sue Baggott, Janice Beaver, Liz Hore, Maggie Jones, Nikki Kenny, Sue Leverton, Donna Oakes, Andrea Pillage, Sharon Saunders, Heidi Steer, Karen Wakley Diane Werker and Sonia Wright.

We are able to contact the majority of members by email, but 53 members have no email address. Postage is quite an expenditure, as a second class stamp costs 55p. We are always happy to receive stamps, so thank you very much to those member who have contributed.

In June, Maggie Wilson and Barbara Grey attended the Angela Rippon exhibition at the university, entitled 'Life in the South West in 1966' and appeared briefly on the associated BBC television programme.

We have received an email from Sandra Nicholson, who attended PHS from 1961 – 1963 as Sandrs Guthrie. She went to Australia as a child migrant and was fostered by a family in Sydney. Her foster father allegedly destroyed any documents and letters related to her life in England and she lost all contact. She remembers Janet Taylor, Dorothy Jones and Yvonne Forsyth, but hasn't been able to contact them. Sandra would be pleased to hear from anyone who remembers her or who was at the

<p>school at that time. We have her email address if anyone is interested.</p> <p>Finally, thanks to all those who have updated their details this year, as it's so important.</p>
<p>9. Nomination and Election of Committee Members</p> <p>Chairman – no nominations Existing committee re-elected. Proposed: Pam Fielding Seconded: Fran Easter Staff representative – Shellie Joynes, nominated by Laura Mitchell, seconded by Heather Morgan.</p> <p>As there were no nominations for Chairman, the committee agreed to continue sharing the role.</p>
<p>10. Dates for your diary</p> <p>Annual Dinner Spring 2017 - This will be held in the Newman Hall on Thursday 23 March. Summer Social (Cheese and wine) – Wednesday 21 June.</p>
<p>11. AOB</p> <p>Some members raised concerns that the annual dinner is to be held at the school again this year as they thought it had been a 'one-off' in 2016. Whilst members are happy to give the girls the opportunity, some felt the chairs were uncomfortable and the venue less comfortable than the hotels we have previously used. The committee commented that one of the reasons for the change, in addition to support the school, was that numbers attending are now so low that most venues will charge for room hire as well as the meal. The arrangements are already in place for the 2017 dinner. The committee agreed to canvass views for preferred venues in 2018.</p>