

CONNECT

The Magazine for the Friends of NGHS 2023

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NOTTINGHAM
GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST



TEDx Talks

The thread of 'humanity' ran through all of the presentations and performances, and we were totally blown away and inspired by what we heard and saw on the night - from our staff, students, alumnae and local community.



1875 Sports Centre

On 18 September, we welcomed former England cricketer, Lydia Greenway OBE, to officially open our brand new 1875 Sports Centre.



Rebecca Maguire

I have very happy memories from my time at NGHS. I joined the Junior School in Year 6. Mrs Renshaw was the Head Teacher, and it was a really nurturing and caring environment.

WELCOME FROM THE HEAD



Welcome to this year's edition of our alumnae magazine, Connect. It's been another wonderful year of special guests, events and activities as well as the success of everyday life at NGHS reflected in another set of outstanding A Level and GCSE results. We also celebrated becoming finalists in two categories of the Independent School of the Year awards: The Rising Star award, and the Independent Girls' School of the Year award. Whilst we didn't come away as winners this time, I am so proud of this well-deserved achievement and recognition.

It was lovely to meet some of you at our reunion event in May and share in some of your memories. I so enjoy talking to our alumnae, hearing about what school life was like during their time here and comparing notes. As our alumnae, you are such inspirational role models for our current students and this year I had the particular pleasure of interviewing Susie Allen-Sierpinski as part of the GDST's "In Conversation With..." series.

You can read more about our interview in the magazine. It was fascinating and wonderful to be able to share Susie's story with our sister schools.

Alumnae also featured heavily in our TEDx event in May - a first for the school and one of only a handful to have taken place in Nottingham at all. I'm very proud of this event which has put us firmly on the TEDx map.

There have been some big changes at the school, most notably the addition of the 1875 Sports Centre to complement

our existing sporting facilities. It's already proving a big hit with our students and those visiting us for sporting events.

Your continued generosity and support of our Bursary and Assistance Fund have once again been overwhelming and meant that even more deserving students have been able to benefit from an education here at NGHS. I was pleased to be able to welcome 11 bright new girls to school this year. Thank you all so much for your engagement and involvement with our fundraising and philanthropic efforts. It really does mean the world.

So, please do enjoy reading this edition of Connect and please do stay in touch. There are all sorts of exciting things in the pipeline, and who knows, we may get to meet at another reunion.

With very best wishes.

Julie Keller
Head



School News



Waterways Ramble for Children in Need

On Friday 18 November the entire Nursery, Infant and Junior School community set off on this year's exciting BBC Countryfile ramble for Children in Need raising over £1600 in the process! Thanks again to Nottingham Express Transit (NET) for getting us all safely to and from our destinations; the younger children particularly loved the tram ride. It was very exciting seeing all the sights along Nottingham's waterways as we made our way to the new Island Quarter to enjoy a lunch stop, with entertainment from the Year 5 and 6 Ukuladies. By the end of the day we had tired legs but happy smiles at the money we raised for a great cause.



Strings Workshop with Sam Sweeney

Sam Sweeney and the band Leveret very kindly hosted a strings workshop with some of our talented Senior School musicians. It was an absolutely amazing afternoon as Sam led the group playing the traditional style of folk music for which the band is famed. Learning completely by ear, our students soon picked up the chords and melodies and learnt a whole piece which they played in rounds with the trio.

Leveret is a unique collaboration between three of England's finest folk musicians: Andy Cutting (button accordion), Sam Sweeney (fiddle) and Rob Harbron (concertina). Together their performances combine consummate musicianship, compelling delivery and captivating spontaneity. It really was a treat to hear everybody playing together.



EMACT Classical Teachers' Latin and Greek Reading competition

Our classical language students enjoyed a rewarding afternoon at the Latin and Greek Reading competition, hosted at Loughborough High School. The return to a live format brought the excitement of performance back to our students, who had worked hard to perfect their skills. The Junior Latin section was particularly competitive; eventually won by Hasara, with Ruqaiyah and Lucy gaining highly commended. The Intermediate section was of a superb standard, with Marina receiving highly commended. Finally the Senior Latin section, where the text was a tricky section of Aeneid 12, was dealt with excellently by our Year 13 students, and Mia took home 2nd place. The whole team supported each other and had a great time interacting with fellow Classicists from other schools. It was lovely to see the friendly and familiar face of former Classics teacher, Dr Henshaw, on the judging panel too!



School Photo

We were absolutely delighted to have our whole school photograph taken on Wednesday 29 March as it's been nearly 10 years since the last photo. It was a great opportunity for every girl to leave their mark and create memories of the school for the future.

You can watch our heartwarming behind the scenes video on our YouTube channel with the below link or scan the QR code:
bit.ly/3rVxUgx



Thank You to our wonderful staff leavers

Mrs Carlyon, our Library Assistant for 20 years! She always provided a helpful and warm service and of course dutifully dressed up on World Book Day!

Mr Denyer, teaching Maths here for over 22 years. He's taking a well-earned retirement, no doubt to spend more time cycling, painting and generally enjoying life.

Mrs Batt has been here for two years teaching Philosophy, Religion and Ethics. We will all miss her, especially Mrs Lewis who has become a great friend.

Thank you all so much for everything you have done for NGHS.



Celebrating the Coronation

God Save The King! The 'rain of King Charles' just about held off for our celebratory picnic in honour of the Coronation.

Kicking off the Coronation Bank Holiday weekend our Nursery, Infant and Junior girls enjoyed live music from the Year 5 Ukuladies, and conjuring tricks from Magic Duncan. It was lovely to see so many girls dressed for the occasion and enjoying the company of their friends during this historic event.

Our annual Summer Exhibition also focused on all things Coronation. From spectacular cakes and shoebox garden designs to portraits of King Charles and crowns made of items from nature, our girls really pulled out all the stops. We saw (and tasted) some remarkable creative creations and awarded some well-deserved rosettes, though we have to say that **EVERYONE** was a winner on this very special occasion.

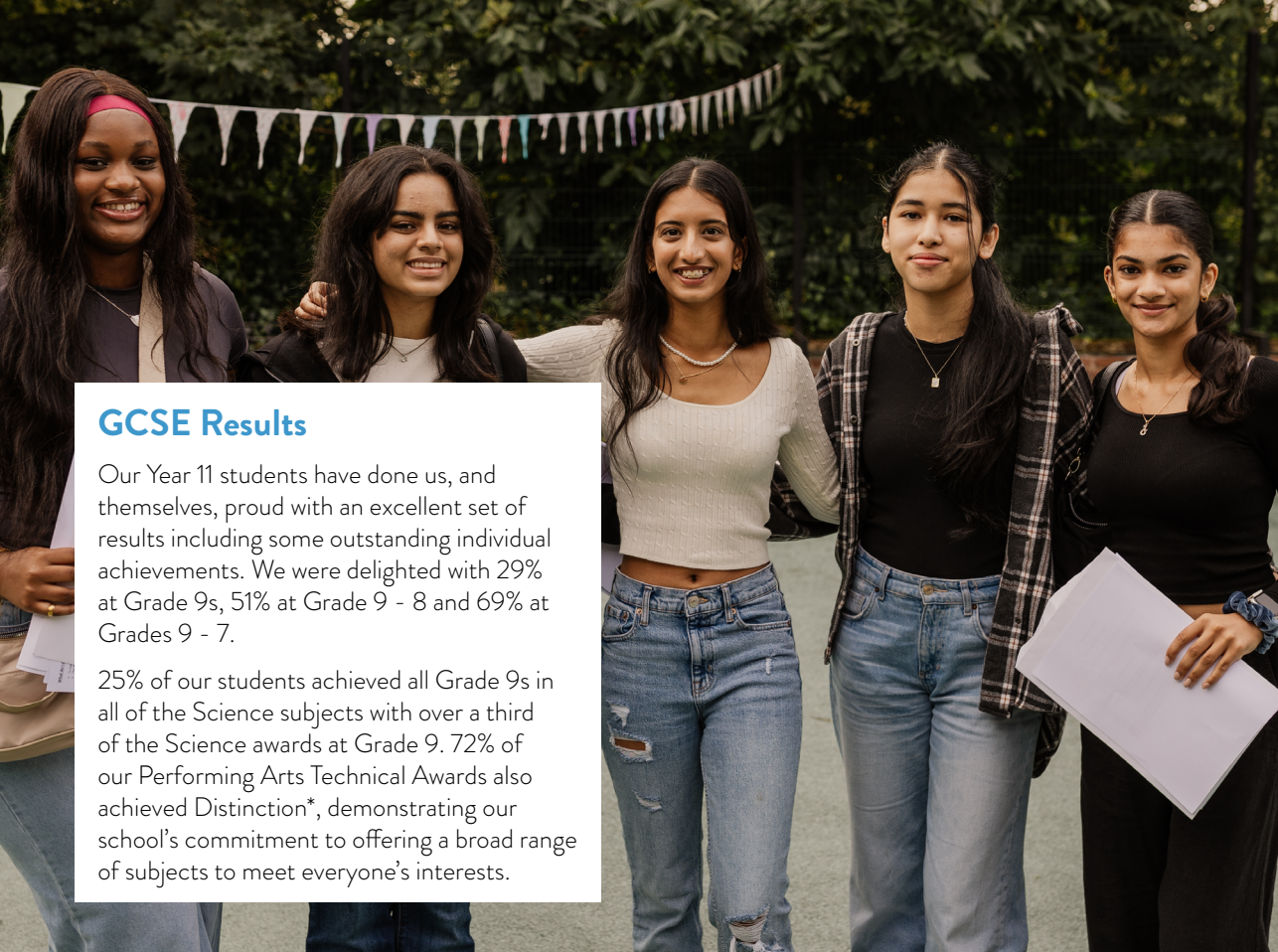


Binks Yard Rock Concert

Sunday 2 July was probably the highlight of the NGHS musical calendar. Over 100 singers and musicians from Year 6 to Year 12 took to the stage at Binks Yard in Nottingham's Island Quarter and performed over eight hours of stunning and varied music in front of a huge and delighted crowd.

We're so fortunate to have been able to perform at this new Nottingham venue. Our students love to perform in school but they especially love to perform at external venues where they get a real feel for live performing. On top of all this, we raised nearly £2,000 towards making our music provision at NGHS even better.





GCSE Results

Our Year 11 students have done us, and themselves, proud with an excellent set of results including some outstanding individual achievements. We were delighted with 29% at Grade 9s, 51% at Grade 9 - 8 and 69% at Grades 9 - 7.

25% of our students achieved all Grade 9s in all of the Science subjects with over a third of the Science awards at Grade 9. 72% of our Performing Arts Technical Awards also achieved Distinction*, demonstrating our school's commitment to offering a broad range of subjects to meet everyone's interests.

A Level Results

Congratulations to the Class of 2023 who again did exceptionally well in their A Levels. We are thrilled with our students achieving 50% at Grades A* to A, 80% at Grade A* to B and a 100% pass rate as well as all A* - A for the EPQ.

One thing which really stands out is the strength of character of our Year 13 students and how they know their own minds. They have studied the subjects that they love, achieved fantastic results, and selected the universities that will help them succeed in their chosen fields.

Many have now headed off to Oxford, Cambridge and other Russell Group universities; several to study Medicine and others to study a variety of creative and STEM subjects. Whatever they put their minds to, they will achieve - and this is the measure of our success. All our students embody that "GDST Spirit" of which we're so proud and we look forward to welcoming them into the GDST alumnae community.



School Events

Careers

We always say our alumnae network is our superpower and we are so grateful to our alumnae coming back and supporting our careers programme, sharing their invaluable wisdom and knowledge. This year we have welcomed back over 30 alumnae to talk and share their highlights of studying a particular subject and their career journey. We are also thankful to our network for providing mentoring opportunities, careers advice, and supporting university interviews.

Careers Talk on Emergency Medicine

In February, we were thrilled to welcome back 2003 alumna Amy Carty (née Randle) to talk about her career in Emergency Medicine in both the RAF and the NHS. When Amy joined NGHS she always knew she wanted to become a doctor and after attending an RAF careers talk in Year 11, it sparked a realisation that she could use that passion in the RAF.

The students enjoyed asking Amy about her day-to-day role in hospital, what it's like working in Emergency Medicine and being on the front line for both the NHS and RAF. Amy spoke a lot about the importance of



teamwork, being a self-starter and having a good work ethic, and how these attributes from her days at school have helped her throughout her career. We also heard about how she's learnt how to fly an aeroplane solo!

To end the session we were also pleased to inform Amy that she still holds the Year 10 1500m Sports Day Record, which she has held for over 20 years!

Applying for University

In March, we were delighted to welcome 2019 alumna, Summer Kennedy, back to school to talk to Year 12 about applying to university. Summer is currently a fourth year Medical student at the University of East Anglia and delivered her talk as part of UEA's Back to Sixth programme. The students loved to hear about applying to university, why she chose UAE and her life as a student.

Summer also spoke to those Year 12 students who are particularly interested in pursuing medicine. Her insights from working with

Medic Mentor and Oddballs Foundation were extremely beneficial. We're very grateful to Summer for taking the time to come back to NGHS and share her experiences with us.



Star of the West End

It was fantastic to have a visit from our very own star of stage and screen, NGHS alumna Jessica Temple, Class of 2010. Jess came to speak to, and inspire, our NGHS drama students about her career in the performing arts, having most recently appeared in the West End in Patriots and The King Stone at Nottingham Playhouse. We are so grateful to Jess for popping in and sharing her story.





Left to right: Graihagh Goode, Lizzie Hard, Hayley Jackson, Ellie Willetts, Jane Birkett and Selena Deng

Careers in STEAM

At our Careers in STEAM event we welcomed back some incredible alumnae from a range of industries in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. Our six alumnae speakers enjoyed a tour around the school for old times' sake before taking to the stage to share their career paths with our pupils and parents.

We heard from Lizzie Hard (Class of 2009) who studied Economics at the University of Bath. After working in financial services, Lizzie decided a change of career was needed. She took a risk, resigned from her job, completed a coding bootcamp and has never looked back!

Computer Science and coding is such a popular subject here

at NGHS and it was great to hear Lizzie dispel myths about working in coding, as a Front-End Developer for Lego. Lizzie's advice about taking risks has really paid off for her.

We then welcomed Selena Deng (Class of 2014), who shared the importance of industrial placements as part of her master's degree in Engineering at Cambridge University. It was great to hear how influential those experiences have been, how they influenced her career change to become a Senior Consultant at Q5.

Last time Jane Birkett (Class of 1995) came to NGHS was for her 20-year school reunion in 2015. Jane told us how she developed a passion for Psychology at school and went on to study Forensic Psychology

as an undergraduate and for her masters, which led to her career at the National Crime Agency (NCA). Jane talked about the many roles and opportunities offered by the NCA, and after listening to Jane's talk, a Year 9 pupil said:

"It really opened my mind; I had no idea there were so many roles in the NCA. Hearing from Jane has made me think again about what I want to do in the future."

Ellie Willetts (Class of 2010) is a familiar face to NGHS and it was lovely to see and hear how her career in the Business and Strategy Department at Jaguar Land Rover is progressing. Ellie studied Space and Planetary Exploration at the University of Surrey and realised her actual passion was to work in automotive engineering, a

change from her childhood dream of working in space.

Hayley Jackson (Class of 2014) studied for a masters in Engineering at the University of Nottingham and highlighted the value of being on a degree sponsored by Taylor Woodrow. Hayley is now a Section Engineer working on HS2 and she loves how varied her working day is. It was great to see all aspects of her job, including the orange high vis!

Graihagh Goode (Class of 2012) studied History at the University of Bristol. Not being quite sure about what she wanted to do, she enjoyed making the most of internships and found Marketing the perfect blend for her passion for writing and creativity. Graihagh is now a Marketing Manager for BBC One and iPlayer. She spoke about the importance of networking and connections and finished by saying:

“There is no such thing as a linear career trajectory – feel comfortable in side-stepping or doing something different.”

It was great to hear what our speakers have been up to since leaving NGHS and we're very grateful to them for sharing their time and wisdom.

In Conversation With...NGHS alumna Susie Allen-Sierpinski talks about school and about her career

The 'In Conversation With...' series is a GDST programme which sees us talk to different GDST alumnae, and other brilliant successful women, on a variety of engaging topics. In April we welcomed NGHS alumna, Susie Allen-Sierpinski, to speak with our Head, Julie Keller.

Susie Allen-Sierpinski (Class of 2002) chatted with Mrs Keller about her role as a Mission Integration Engineer for NASA. She is currently working on the lunar mission programme 'Artemis', named after the twin sister of Apollo, which aims to put the next man and the first woman on the moon.

Nearly 100 students, alumnae, staff and teachers tuned in to find out about Susie's experience of working as a woman in a male dominated industry, the most challenging aspects of her job and her favourite things about working for NASA.

Susie's love for space and desire to work in the field started at a very young age and her passion and tenacity ensured that she found out exactly what she needed to do to succeed.

When asked about the support offered by NGHS she said: “Nottingham Girls' High School taught me to believe in myself. Nobody ever said “no you can't do that”. Look inside yourself and find what makes you happy.”

Susie listed her role models as Jim Lovell (Astronaut), Lewis Hamilton (if she didn't work in the space industry she'd be a Formula 1 Engineer) and her grandfather who was in the RAF.

Susie's final thoughts were to encourage students to stay in touch with the friends they met in school. She treasures the picture of her group of close friends which they gave her when she moved to the US.



NGHS Productions

The Squire Performing Arts Centre continues to be the perfect place for our students to develop and thrive with the skills that are so important to any career – creativity and confidence. Our theatre has been full of brilliant NGHS productions as the students not only take to the stage but also help with the lighting, staging and casting.

100

We thoroughly enjoyed the Sixth Form Drama production of 100 arranged with Nick Hern Books. It was an incredibly well performed piece of very moving, powerful and thought-provoking drama.

High School Musical

Our annual musical is always a highlight in the school calendar and this year was no exception with our Senior School production of High School Musical. We had three incredible nights of brilliant entertainment, with such talent, energy and enthusiasm from one of the largest ever casts we have had.



The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe

The Key Stage 3 Drama production of The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe was phenomenal. Our students performed for three wonderful nights, pulling off some fantastic performances. They are so incredibly talented and worked really hard, creating a brilliant set and with tremendous singing and acting.

The Bee Musical

We had a lovely day at the end of May when our Key Stage 1 pupils performed The Bee Musical. Not only was it a lovely performance, but it was also incredibly educational and made us all think about how important bees are to the planet.

Pirates of the Curry Bean

This Year 3 and 4 production was so much fun with so many hilarious jokes - we loved it. Well done to all involved in this fabulous performance; it really was a treat.

The Lion King

Our incredible Year 6 production of The Lion King was truly moving. The standard of acting, singing and performing was exceptional and we are really proud of every single member of the cast.



The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe



The Bee Musical



Pirates of the Curry Bean



The Lion King



The Lion King

WORLD CHALLENGE – MOROCCO

In July 2022, ten of our students had the most amazing experience when they travelled to Morocco as part of the World Challenge expedition. Freya Wagland in Year 12 tells us more.

“On arriving in Morocco we were greeted with a luxurious, flavourful spread of Moroccan cuisine, cooked by our host family. After dinner we took our roll mats onto the roof to sleep under the calmness of the sky, which felt seemingly unfamiliar, free from the interference of artificial light. The next few days were spent working on our project element; chiselling tiles and painting walls of a local school’s grounds to provide a more creative environment for them to work in, and a safer, more educational playtime area.

We spent our evenings connecting to our host family and enjoying dances to traditional Berber songs. We rounded off our phase in Taghbalt in the sand dunes, eating around the warmth and glow of a campfire whilst watching our hosts and their friends perform the traditional Amazigh dancing and music called ‘Ahidous’. The men played the ‘Idgams’ (drums) whilst the women repeated poetry and sang together, before teaching us all the dance steps.

The next day we travelled to the Atlas Mountains and were met by Fuad, our guide for the next few days. Trekking in 35° heat was physically and mentally challenging, but reaching the peaks of the mountains gave us an immense sense of reward, helped by the comical presence of the mountain goats! The nights spent trekking in the mountains were significantly different to those in the desert. The coolness, which was greatly valued when sleeping on the roof, was soon unappreciated as temperatures dropped. Our first night camping was filled with shivering regret after foolishly believing we could get away without our sleeping bags!

We woke up to the sounds of the call to prayer at 5am. Burdened with 3-litre water pouches and the blazing sun, we set off on our day’s trek, chatting and laughing at each other’s complaints and rewarded with remarkable views from the summit. At the end of the day we were welcomed by a viridescent opening amongst the trees; our final campsite before returning to a mountainside gîte. Although relieved to finish four days of physical strain, the last night of our hike was full of chat about how proud we were of each other and sharing our sentimental ups and downs.

Emotions were high when leaving our guide Fuad, who had kept us all going through the toughest sections of the trek. However we were soon greeted by the cooler breeze of the seaside town Essaouira. Here we enjoyed rest and recuperation; at the beach, eating crêpes and souvenir shopping, whilst quickly learning the art of bartering in the markets. We then returned to Marrakech to test out our new bartering skills in the souks, visiting incredible tombs and palaces tiled with the most intricate patterns, and the first women’s history museum.

Tears were shed on the same hotel roof where we started, and even though we were looking forward to reuniting with our families, the disappointment of leaving this once in a lifetime experience was evident in all of us.

Stepping back onto the school grounds, embraced by smiling family and friends, was inevitably one of the most emotional parts of the trip. But the bustle of storytelling blended in with goodbyes and thank yous to Carly, Ross and Dan who joined us on one of the most memorable trips we will ever undergo. The memories we made will be taken with us through every experience for the rest of our lives.”



1875 SPORTS CENTRE

On Monday 18 September, we welcomed former England cricketer, Lydia Greenway OBE, to officially open our brand new 1875 Sports Centre.

The recently completed sports centre has been built to enhance our already renowned sports provision and includes a fully equipped fitness suite, yoga and pilates studio and a refurbished gym and sports hall where students can take part in basketball, netball, cricket, football and badminton amongst many other sports and activities.

Julie Keller commented, “Our girls love to play sport and cricket is one of the most popular. This summer our U13 and U15 squads were named County Cricket Champions, so I’m delighted that we could welcome professional women cricketers to NGHS, and help us champion the importance of girls taking part in sport.”

Joining Lydia were Leicestershire and The Blaze player Grace Ballinger, and Nottinghamshire and The Blaze player Lucy Higham. All three cricketers took part in an exciting coaching showcase with our PE staff and students.

Mrs Keller continued, “Health and fitness is a core part of our school’s approach to educational success. We know that many girls in particular give up sport as they get older so providing an accessible and diverse sports programme in partnership with inspirational female role models is vital in giving girls the confidence they need to keep active for life.”

The opening marks the start of our preparations for our 150th anniversary in September 2025. Watch this space for news about the forthcoming celebrations!





TEDx TALKS

What can our Humanity bring to the Greater Good?

We were absolutely thrilled to hold our first ever TEDx event “What can our Humanity bring to the Greater Good” in May this year. The thread of ‘humanity’ ran through all of the presentations and performances, and we were totally blown away and inspired by what we heard and saw on the night - from our staff, students, alumnae and local community.

We were so proud of our participating Sixth Form students who showed such confidence and maturity at such a big event. Our MC for the evening was Aminah from Year 12 who did a fantastic job of introducing each guest speaker and sharing her own thoughts on humanity:

“When I think of what humanity brings to the greater good, the first thing that comes to mind is empathy; one of the most important skills we can possess and show to each other as human beings.”



The first theme was ‘Community: Building Safe Spaces with a Shared Purpose,’ introduced by our Head, Julie Keller. In this honest and thought-provoking opening speech, she spoke about how we need to redefine leadership, incorporating flexibility to encourage better wellbeing:

“We must educate girls to lead... but without compromising the things that are important to them now - wellbeing, health, fun, friendships. Why should they leave their values behind when they step into the world of work?”





“Every shift in the political climate, every development on the global stage affects individuals differently - be that due to their sexuality, gender, race or economic background - and it’s essential that we’re willing to reflect these changes within the curriculum.”

Feizah

Our second speaker, Sixth Form student Feizah, spoke about de-colonising the curriculum. Her well-informed talk was delivered superbly, highlighting the issue of how education needs to become more inclusive:

“Every shift in the political climate, every development on the global stage affects individuals differently - be that due to their sexuality, gender, race or economic background - and it’s essential that we’re willing to reflect these changes within the curriculum.”

We introduced our second theme, ‘Connection: Overcoming Division through a United Dialogue’ hearing from Claire Bale, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for the GDST, and Inclusion Lead here at NGHS. Her regular appearances on local TV and radio, together with her anti-racist blog, help her to deliver her inspirational message; about how changing our consumption of literature and media can open our minds:

“We all have the power to connect more deeply with the world around us. A world that needs positive change.”



Claire Bale

You can watch all the speakers and performances on our YouTube or by scanning the QR code: <https://bit.ly/3JnOYRG>



Ela

Our next Sixth Form speaker, Ela, did an incredible job of talking about an often-avoided subject - periods. Ela was confident and clear in her messaging about what we should all be doing to tackle period poverty and improve standards of period care.

Theme three, 'Creativity: The Irreplaceable Human Superpower' introduced by our next speaker, Sudha Kheterpal, one of our amazing alumnae. She has had an illustrious career as a percussionist, with Faithless and The Spice Girls among others, and is already an experienced TEDx speaker. Her talk had us all up on our feet as she gave us her three hacks on 'How to Speak Up and Stand in Your Space':

"Practise embracing failure and learn from your mistakes, and through this you will develop deep empathy for others and in today's world, that really makes a difference."

And finally to theme four, 'Courage: Overcoming Convention with Conviction' and our concluding speaker, Summaya Mughal, another NGHS alumna. Summaya is a Senior BBC TV/Radio Presenter, and the award-winning Podcast host of 'Brown Gal Can't Swim'. Summaya gave a humorous yet very moving talk about her life here as a Pakistani Muslim woman and having the courage of her convictions when making life and career choices.

All in all, we had the most uplifting evening and are so grateful to all of our speakers, performers and guests. We're all unique but our humanity is what we all have in common. Used in the right way, this 'superpower' we possess can help the world become a better place and it is without doubt, irreplaceable.



Sudha Kheterpal



Summaya Mughal

A MESSAGE FROM OUR OUTGOING HEAD GIRL

As we say farewell and good luck to our Class of 2023, our outgoing Head Girl Libby shared her thoughts about her journey through NGHS and how her experiences here will help shape her future:

“My 14 years at Nottingham Girls’ High School have been really very special. It has been a huge privilege to not only be Head Girl, but also to be part of this great community in which we are considerate and kind to each other, we learn from and with each other, and we challenge each other to do better in and outside the classroom.

I remember saying to the Year 6s, “The biggest tip I can share with you is that you should be excited by the new opportunities change brings. As you start new things you should never be scared to ask for help. There will always be others feeling as concerned as you are and many around to offer advice”.

As many of us are going to big and possibly scary places next year, all the lessons we’ve learned at NGHS will help us on our way. We will be confident, proactive and positive, and never embarrassed or scared to ask for help.

So what has NGHS helped me to achieve? I’ve achieved independence in a school that I love; a school and everything that it stands for that has really helped me to be ‘extraordinary’.

Being Head Girl has helped me learn how to listen, to communicate, to organise and to lead. It’s helped me to understand that everyone has their own valid point of view and that we learn as we appreciate the views of others.

I really believe that a GDST student is easily distinguished from others. We’re kind, we’re confident, we’re positive, we’re inquisitive, we’re independent and we’re ambitious.



Libby, Head Girl 2022/23

I’m really proud to say that I’ve been to NGHS and I’ve had the very best 14 years I could have ever hoped for. I’m excited to find out what happens next for us all. We’ve achieved so much, together. It’s going to be fascinating to find out what we all achieve in the future.

Libby topped her success at school by achieving As at A Level, in Biology and Chemistry and an A in Geography and is now at University of Durham studying Natural Sciences. Congratulations Libby, and thank you for your stellar contribution to our school.*

Alumnae News

HANNAH FOWLER

NGHS Alumna, Class of 2022

Dr Lucy Champion Scholarship (GDST travel scholarship)

Last year, NGHS alumna Hannah Fowler, Class of 2022, received the Dr Lucy Champion Travel Scholarship, from money bequeathed by Dr Champion (d. 1985). Dr Champion was a medical practitioner, educated at Sydenham and Bromley High Schools GDST, and a founder-member of The Friends of the GDST.

Hannah used the travel scholarship to visit Sri Lanka to complete a four week midwifery volunteer placement ahead of embarking on her degree in Medicine at the University of Manchester.

Here is Hannah's account of her time in Sri Lanka:

"I arrived in Colombo in mid April and embraced the extreme humidity in readiness for beginning my placement at Sri Lanka's largest state owned women's hospital. I completed my hospital induction before the weekend so that I was ready to hit the ground running (travelling by tuk tuk) on Monday! The moment I stepped into the hospital I experienced sensory overload; the lack of air-conditioning, the smells and the sight of women labouring in corridors made me face the reality of what lay ahead.

My main duties were to support in surgery (largely hysterectomies and caesareans), support the sexual-health clinicians, dress the newborn babies on the labour ward and pay home visits with the community midwife. What surprised me the most was that expectant mothers arrive at the hospital by bus, without any belongings or a partner or husband, and when they and their baby are discharged, they return home by bus as well. The youngest mother that I met was 14 years old and suffering from Dengue fever which is common. Abortion remains illegal in Sri Lanka and many





of the doctors seemed supportive of this which, to be honest, shocked me. Even though religious observance is an important part of Sri Lankan life, I expected their views on women's health to be more progressive.

In the community, there are high levels of deprivation, including drug abuse; babies are often born prematurely and as a result are under-weight. In addition, a high percentage of Sri Lankans live with Type 2 Diabetes and this presents issues for mother and baby antenatally and postnatally.

My host mother was a headteacher in a girls' primary school. I spent a number of days also volunteering in her school. The children are taught to be proud of their country and were keen to tell me about their love for it. This resonated with me all the more as I explored different places by train and foot during the weekends. Kandy, Ella and Sigiriya were all geographically beautiful.

I am so fortunate to have secured the Dr Lucy Campion Travel Scholarship, and I know that the experiences and learning that I have gained will stand me in good stead as I go to university to study Medicine."



A photograph of Victoria Monk, a young woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a blue athletic top and dark shorts, rowing a white racing boat on a calm blue sea under a clear sky. The boat is a long, narrow scull with multiple oars visible. The background shows a distant horizon line.

VICTORIA MONK - ROWING THE ATLANTIC

NGHS Alumna, Class of 2010

NGHS alumna and former Deputy Head Girl, Victoria Monk (Class of 2010) is undertaking one of the world's toughest challenges, to inspire more girls and women to take up and continue to pursue sport.

Victoria and three other teammates have come together to form There She Rows – an all-female crew planning to row 3,000 miles, unassisted, across the Atlantic Ocean in December 2023.

The Atlantic Challenge starts in La Gomera, in the Canary Islands and finishes in Antigua in the Caribbean some 40 days later. The weather and conditions will be extreme and the team will row two hours on, two hours off, 24 hours a day for the duration of the crossing, contending with up to 40ft waves, storms and potential capsizes.

The race is deemed one of the toughest challenges in the world, but Victoria and team hope the impact of their efforts will be bigger than the challenge itself.

“We want to use this row as a platform to inspire more women and girls to get into sport and help to address some of the huge inequalities that still exist,” Victoria said, adding:

“More than half of girls will quit playing sport by age 17 and there are fewer women than men exercising at every age group - missing out on its benefits in both their personal and professional lives.”

Victoria goes on to say:

“More than 90% of female executives played sport as a teenager [*Why female athletes make winning Entrepreneurs*, a report by Ernst and Young and ESPN]. We want to inspire more girls to get into sport and support the female leaders of the next generation. If we can cross an ocean in a tiny rowing boat (having never rowed before), then you can be inspired to cross your own Atlantic Ocean, whatever that may look like for you.”

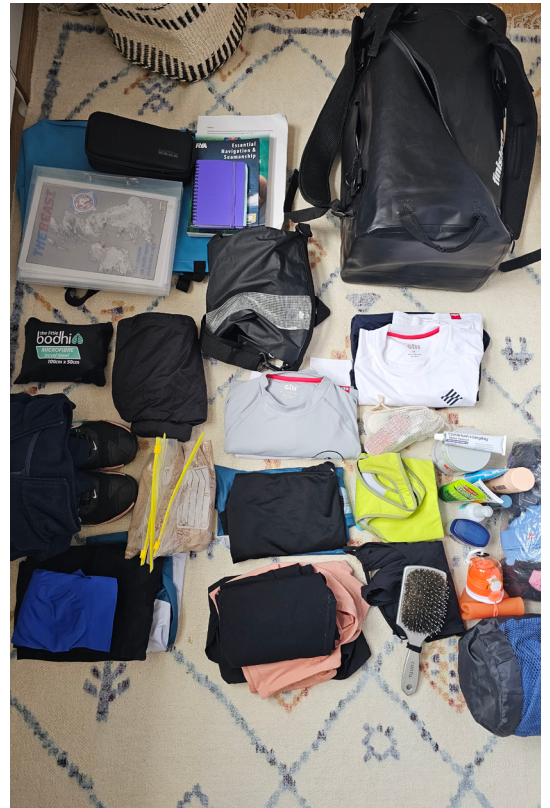
Over the Easter weekend, Victoria and her team will walk 100 miles (161km) across the South Downs carrying their boat as they continue to try to inspire girls and women to get into sport.

They will start from Winchester in Hampshire, and trek to Eastbourne in East Sussex. If they complete this gruelling challenge, they will have walked the furthest distance carrying a boat ever recorded and will achieve a world record.

Team There She Rows is raising money for the Women's Sport Trust, a leading UK charity whose aim is to raise the visibility and increase the impact of women's sport. They're also supporting the Teenage Cancer Trust (in memory of NGHS friend, Alexis Peadon) and Endometriosis UK.

We are excited to follow this challenge and we wish Victoria and her teammates lots of luck. We are looking forward to welcoming Victoria back into school to inspire our current students.

Follow their progress on Instagram:
<https://www.instagram.com/theresherows/>





IN CONVERSATION WITH FREYA MCGARVA

NGHS Alumna, Class of 2022

We were delighted to hear from Freya, an incredible skater, an activity she balanced alongside her studies at NGHS. After completing her A Levels, Freya was offered a paid position to skate professionally with Holiday On Ice. She tells us more about her time at NGHS and her passion for skating.

"I joined the Junior School in Year 5 and the sports opportunities were brilliant. I was always involved in a lot of school sports teams such as hockey, netball, swimming and athletics, which continued during Senior School, where I was a part of the sports leaders activities. I also performed in school productions with the gymnastics club, something which my inner performer really loved! Academically I always enjoyed Art and Geography and I went on to study Geography, Economics and PE at A Level. I think that Sixth Form was my favourite time at school because I could study what I was passionate about and had more personal interaction with the teachers.

Are you still in contact with friends from school?

I have a friend who I have been attached at the hip to ever since Junior School! We see each other often, even if it is over FaceTime whilst I'm away touring and she is at university. I also have a lovely group of friends who I got to know during Sixth Form who I catch up with when I am home. They are all at university but some of them came to watch me on tour in France which was really nice.

Did you have any memorable or influential teachers during your time at NGHS?

Because I did a lot of sport throughout my time at NGHS, Mrs Hall will always be a memorable teacher for me. She taught me since I was nine and really watched me grow up, improve as a skater and develop as a person. During the A Level course we developed a strong teacher-student bond along with Miss Salisbury (now Mrs Morris!). They were both always so supportive of my skating and are two teachers who I will always remember, because they invested their time in me and I will always be grateful for that.

Can you tell us about your skating achievements?

I have been on the British Ice Skating Performance Team since I was 13, and have 14 British Champion titles for Synchronised Skating and have competed at five World Championships.

Because I had been skating at a high level since I joined school, NGHS was very accommodating and supportive when I was competing in international competitions throughout the winter season. School always allowed me to have the time off, ensuring I was keeping up with my class and homework. I would often do all my catchup and homework before I left for a competition so that I could focus whilst I was competing; this also made it easy to continue with the class as soon as I would get back.

I was often returning to school the same day as coming home in the early hours of a Monday morning! The teachers were always very supportive of me and always wished me luck and asked how it went. Although I was still competing in my A Level year, I managed to juggle two World Championships (one Junior and one Senior) and 3 A Levels with success in both areas, due to support from school, teachers and friends combined with a love for my subjects and my work ethic.

How did Holiday On Ice come about?

I love competing however I have always loved the performance side the most and making people smile by sharing my passion with them. When I was fifteen I decided that I definitely wanted to perform in ice shows as soon as I turned eighteen. I was encouraged by a Holiday On Ice choreographer who had worked with my synchronised skating team and saw that I had a flair for performance that would fit nicely into ice shows.

I applied to the company in March 2022 which was a stressful process as I was also knee deep in revision for my exams and thinking about university decisions! I accepted a place at the University of Leeds for Economics and Geography as a back-up option. I received the Holiday On Ice job offer in July 2022 and deferred my university place for September 2023. I began a six-month tour in November, performing twice a day nearly every day (flying through arenas on a wire and harness!) in The Netherlands, Austria and France. It was so rewarding to finally be a professional ice skater after so many years of hard work and sacrifice, and to get paid to travel the world and perform for over a quarter of a million people was a dream come true.

What are your career ambitions?

I would love to keep performing for as long as I possibly can as I feel like it's my 'calling'. I'd love to work all over the world, and to move up the ranks in

the show world. I am already preparing for my next seven month tour in Germany. The gap year I was planning has turned into a few gap years! I would like to use my studies for a career post-skating once I have retired but I'm in no rush for this at the moment. I have a 'do it while you can' attitude as I can't skate forever, but I can go to university at any age. I also know that the traditional university route isn't for everything so I believe that if you have something you're passionate about, pursue it!"

We want to wish Freya the best of luck with her skating career - we are so proud that you are following your dreams.



IN CONVERSATION WITH RUBY WANG

NGHS Alumna, Class of 2010

Tell us about your NGHS journey. When did you join, what did you study?

I joined NGHS in 2003, and was very fortunate to be offered a full, seven-year scholarship kindly granted by HSBC. I loved studying Science and Art in particular as I knew that I wanted to be either a surgeon or a painter. For A Level, I studied Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Fine Art.

What are you doing now?

I like keeping busy, and am currently juggling quite a few things! I still practise as a doctor, part time, but most of my time is focused on Lintris, the consulting firm I founded. We provide health policy and health technology strategic advice for public and private sector clients, including government, thinktanks, pharma, tech companies and start-

ups. I also sit on the Digital Health Council at the Royal Society of Medicine. I find mentorship and volunteering really rewarding: I mentor medical students and doctors, and volunteer for a suicide charity called The Listening Place. In my spare time, I also love painting and going to galleries and museums - my dreams of being an artist are still yet to be achieved!

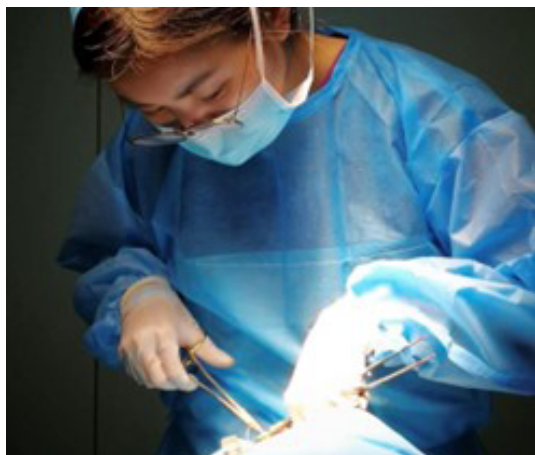
What do you remember most about NGHS?

I remember, as a nervous 10 year old at my scholarship entry interview, being asked to describe myself using one adjective. I debated in my head for a long time before stuttering the word “creative” to the interviewer. I’m not sure whether that answer made a difference, but I was very grateful to get the scholarship and be able to learn in such a supportive environment, where my creative energy flourished. I also have so many fun memories, from chocolate-stuffed school trips to Cadbury’s and Strelley Woods, to unforgettable Duke of Edinburgh hikes and camping.

Did you always want a career in medicine?

I have wanted to be a surgeon since I was about seven years old. I always loved paints and crafts, and I dreamed about being able to use my hands in an operation to directly make a difference to someone’s life. However, I didn’t know any doctors or anyone working in health at all, and I didn’t have a clue about what the job would actually be like, until Year 11 when I shadowed a surgeon during Work Experience Week. I also knew how competitive medicine was, and I was very nervous when I was applying to university. However, NGHS





made me believe that I could achieve anything I wanted, as long as I was passionate enough and tried my absolute best.

How has your time at NGHS helped you get to where you are now?

I know that I would not be where I am today without the support of such incredible teachers and form tutors. I will always remember their names and faces, and I am forever thankful for their encouragement, every step of the way. I am also incredibly grateful for the lifelong friendships that I made here - our group of girls have now known each other for two decades (!). We still go on at least one holiday a year together, where we reminisce about our school days and how far we have all come - it's an amazing community that I know I can always lean on.

What would you say to any NGHS pupils that are interested in a career in medicine?

Medicine is a demanding career, but it's incredibly rewarding. For any girl that wants to be a doctor, go for it! It's a long road with many years of studying and training, but when you have the chance to look after your first patient, and make a difference to their life, nothing is comparable.

Our world is so adaptable and full of opportunities now, and you have so many options at your fingertips. A career now doesn't mean a career for life. After working as a doctor for a few years, I decided to make an unusual career change from clinical practice into health-tech, and then into government - in fact, I was the only doctor working in the entire embassy! Remember that each experience you pick up along the way builds you into a more unique person, with extra special value. All of these opportunities made me into who I am today, and gave me the skills and the courage to start my own company.

I have made several career transitions already, but each step of the way, I continue to be motivated by my own curiosity and eagerness to keep learning. I would absolutely encourage any and all girls at NGHS to strive for your wildest dreams, and to never doubt your own ability. No one decides your path, only you can decide your own unique journey!

What advice would you give the next generation of NGHS pupils?

My seven years at NGHS were actually the longest time I've ever spent in one place, both before and since. I recognise that now as such a rare and precious opportunity. When you finally graduate, ready to fly out into the world, you probably won't even recognise the girl you were when you first arrived here. Treasure this opportunity to grow. Take this precious time to find out who you are, what you love doing, and who you want to be: NGHS has everything you need to get you exactly there.

What would you say is your "motto for life"?

Be ambitious and be brave, and remember that, just because someone hasn't done it before, doesn't mean you can't be the first. However, don't ever be afraid to ask for help, to lean on friends, and definitely don't forget to have fun along the way!



IN CONVERSATION WITH REBECCA MAGUIRE

NGHS Alumna, Class of 2009

Tell me a bit about your time at NGHS? What did you enjoy studying?

I have very happy memories from my time at NGHS. I joined the Junior School in Year 6, just after moving to Nottingham from Buckinghamshire. Mrs Renshaw was the Head Teacher, and it was a really nurturing and caring environment. Joining for a year before starting Senior School was also really helpful for me as I was quite shy and it lessened the impact of changing areas and schools at the same time.

I found the Senior School to be really supportive and it really helped me achieve my academic potential, whilst holding space for the other important areas of life too. My favourite subjects were English, Art, History and R.E., but I did enjoy the sciences too. I've always been curious and asked lots of questions, so academics came quite easily to me as I was (usually) eager to learn. My least favourite subject was probably P.E. - I was such a daydreamer that I would often daze out during the instructions and have no idea what I was supposed to be doing!

Are you still in contact with friends from school?

Yes! My best friend from school - Jenny Voce (née Crowther) and I are still very close. We were inseparable at the time, and although mostly fairly studious, we were often being told off for talking too much in lessons. These days we probably talk just as much, but we share anecdotes and photos of our daughters instead!

There's also a wider group of us who keep in touch and try to do meet-ups whenever we can.

I also recently found out that Katie Allen from our year at school has started creating the most beautiful 'wiggle' frames - designed and made in the UK. When we opened the shop I was trying to find as many U.K. manufacturers for frames, and Katie's brand was absolutely perfect for the job! So we now have some of the frames on display and for sale in the shop. It was lovely to reconnect to arrange this!

Did you have any memorable or influential teachers?

I had a lot of wonderful teachers during my time at NGHS. It was one of the really special things about the school - I really felt like they were so invested in our success and I'm still in touch with quite a few.

Mrs Howard was my Chemistry teacher first, but I remember her most in her post as Careers Advisor in Sixth Form. I remember her encouraging me to consider what I enjoyed first, rather than just to think about the subjects I was best at, which is incredibly valuable advice that I have carried with me through all my career decisions. I quickly found a 'home' at school in the Religious Education department.

The department was full of thoughtful, considerate teachers whose lessons felt inspiring and relevant to me. I remember starting each week by looking at the calendar to find out when my next lesson with Mrs Sillito would be! Often involving creative ways to display our work, it was so obvious how much genuine care and passion went into every single lesson.

There is one particularly special teacher who I hold

immense gratitude towards. It was in Mrs Kelly's Religious Education class in Year 9 that I really began to find academic confidence, and the spark of a feeling that I was capable of doing whatever I set my mind to. In those early, formative years, a supportive and encouraging teacher who believes in your potential cannot be underestimated as a force for positive change.

Mrs Kelly's influence on my time at school cannot be overstated. I absolutely owe her passion for ethics (she was a published author in the field) as a key reason why I went on to study Philosophy as my undergraduate degree. But beyond that, her belief in me instilled a confidence that I didn't previously possess, meaning that her impact went beyond the academic and was foundational in establishing my own self-worth and potential. I will forever be grateful for her guidance. I was incredibly sad to hear that Mrs Kelly passed away in 2018.

Tell us more about your career as a solicitor? How was Wildflower illustration born? When did it become your full time role?

When I finished school I went straight to Warwick University to study Philosophy. I had a really wonderful few years there and absolutely loved academic philosophy. When I graduated with a First, I was slightly tempted to explore postgraduate study, but felt that it was probably time to return to 'the real world'.

At this point, it's probably worth mentioning that I had for some reason always reserved my love of art and drawing for the realm of a hobby. It sounds rather strange now considering how much of a role it plays in my life as an artist, but perhaps as the daughter of two doctors, and surrounded by a family with very traditional careers, it just didn't occur to me to consider pursuing it as a career. I followed the advice of my Great Uncle Colin - an artist in later life - to 'draw a little every day' and loved every minute of it. Drawing was how I made

sense of the world. I even studied Art AS Level in an evening class at local Patchings art farm, alongside my other AS levels, because I loved Art, but I didn't want to give up any of my academic subjects for it.

The fact that I loved ethics and debating, and had a good memory, a career in law was an obvious option. When applying for law firms, I wasn't quite sure about moving to London, so I applied



for training contracts mostly in Nottingham and Birmingham firms - with one wildcard. Charles Russell Speechlys was a London Law Firm with a 'satellite office' in Cheltenham, giving me the opportunity to apply for a top tier law firm with a more 'countryside' existence.

Having grown up in the countryside, I valued fresh air and access to nature very highly. After visiting Cheltenham just once for the interview, I immediately left the building and rang my mum. 'I want to move to Cheltenham!' I exclaimed. I instantly fell in love with its beautiful architecture

and its closeness to the open, beautiful countryside of the Cotswolds. Thankfully, I was offered the job 30 minutes later, making this new-found dream a reality.

Charles Russell Speechlys is an absolutely wonderful law firm with a fantastic bunch of personalities and some really excellent lawyers. It really is a very unique place as it provided the opportunity to partake in 'London work' with a more relaxed work-life balance than in the city. I was incredibly lucky to find myself amongst such a supportive set of colleagues and I really enjoyed my training contract.

In the background though, my 'hobby' of art and painting was getting louder, and a little more demanding. Alongside my legal studies, I had built up the bare bones of an illustration business - selling cards and pet + house portraits, first on Etsy and then Not on the High Street. This started mainly so that I could create a source of income that allowed me to quit waitressing (I was a truly terrible waitress!).

Dispatching card and art orders in my spare time and building a loyal following on Instagram had

been very achievable as a law student, especially with the help of my then boyfriend, now husband, Karl. Karl was working at the time as a primary school teacher, and was more than happy to help me in his evenings and weekends as we saved up to go travelling.

However, as a trainee, juggling all these things was not quite so achievable. As a couple, we looked carefully at our lives and decided that pursuing this flourishing business offered a lot of potential, and a life fully in line with our values as a couple. Karl decided to leave his full time teaching job, with the initial intention that he could work part time as a supply teacher, and part time for our business. The reality was that as soon as we made more space for the business, it expanded into all the time we made for it. I think Karl maybe took on one or two supply jobs before we realised that our business, newly named 'Wildflower Illustration Co.' was taking on a life all of its own.

And so it happened that one year later, when I reached the end of my training contract, I had a rather difficult decision to make. With a job opening in the property litigation department where I had really enjoyed two seats, I had a stable, sensible and well-paid career on the table. Or, I could take the leap and work for myself, in our ever-expanding business. I chatted through the decision with an older, wiser friend who was also a creative lawyer. 'Law will always be there if you need it', she said. 'This business of yours is alive right now. You can't let this go'. I followed her advice - and jumped.

In fact, when I reflect on it all now, I think that my insistence that my drawing and creativity for so long were 'just a hobby' may be partially responsible for our almost accidental success. When I explain this to people I always find it helpful to reference Elizabeth Gilbert from 'Big Magic', who writes it much better than I could; "I never wanted to burden my writing with the responsibility of paying





for my life. I knew better than to ask this of my writing, because over the years, I have watched so many other people murder their creativity by demanding that their art pay the bills. Financial demands can put so much pressure on the delicacies and vagaries of inspiration.'

By allowing my art and drawing to stay in the background, it alleviated the pressure of ever really trying to create things that would sell well or be popular. I just created whatever I loved - whatever inspiration came to me. And as the business has grown, even though it now is my career, we've always tried to carve out the space for me to freely create so that this rings true.

It became my full time role in 2017 when I decided to pursue it instead of a Newly Qualified Solicitor role and work alongside Karl. As parents now, we juggle around our four year old daughter Alba, but I always feel incredibly lucky that we have the control around juggling parenthood with our careers.

Tell us more about Wildflower Illustration?

Wildflower Illustration Co. is a value led business driven by a deep appreciation for the beauty of nature and a commitment to sustainable and mindful living. The vast majority of my art that forms the basis of our cards and art prints feature intricate illustrations of flowers, plants and the natural world. We hope that they capture both the beauty and fragility of nature, allowing our customers to bring nature into their homes and to share messages of love, connection and appreciation with others.

We are also dedicated to promoting mindful consumption, with a particular focus on ensuring that all of our products are environmentally responsibly sourced and sustainable. We are always striving to minimise our ecological footprint and we encourage our customers to make thoughtful, well-considered choices in their purchasing decisions.

Earlier this year, we swapped our remote Cotswolds studio for a property in the centre of Cheltenham that has allowed us to combine our production studio with an open retail space. Having a shop front has been a huge change for our business; it has been a wonderful journey as we completed the majority of the renovation work ourselves and have created a beautiful space that we feel very happy to spend time in, and invite our customers into. This is also in line with our long-held hope in creating a local community of like-minded individuals who share an appreciation of art, nature and sustainability. We are nearly ready to start hosting events in our space, including co-painting and writing meet-ups, as well as watercolour, calligraphy and creativity workshops. After being an online business for so long, it has been such a wonderful and exciting experience to really integrate with a community and meet so many customers in real life.

For more details and to buy hand painted cards by Wildflower Illustration Co, visit www.wildflowerillustrationco.com or visit the shop Wildflower Illustration Co, 26 Suffolk Parade, Cheltenham, GL50 2AE.

You can find Katie Allen's frames at almaframes.com or @almaframes on Instagram.

Photography by Philip Gatward

A portrait of Clare Hammond, a woman with short brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a white double-breasted blazer with gold buttons. She is standing in front of a background of horizontal wooden slats, possibly a staircase or a wall. The lighting is soft and even.

CLARE HAMMOND

NGHS Alumna, Class of 2003

Clare Hammond, Class of 2003, performed Rachmaninov's Paganini Variations with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at The Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham on Saturday 11 March.

The Nottingham Philharmonic Orchestra 150th Celebration of Rachmaninov took place at The Albert Hall in Nottingham on Saturday 11 March and Sunday 12 March. The widely acclaimed NPO features NGHS alumnae, staff and a parent.

Find out more about Clare's forthcoming performances: <https://clarehammond.com/>

ELECTRA PERIVOLARIS

NGHS Alumna, Class of 2003

Electra Perivolaris, Class of 2014, was involved in Streetwise Opera at The Nottingham Playhouse in March. She told us about her involvement with the project:

“I’ve been working with Streetwise Opera over the last year as part of their Re:sound initiative, which is centred around the commissioning of nine composers across the UK, working in different homelessness settings to create micro-operas inspired by perspectives on the cities of Nottingham, Manchester and London through the eyes of people who have experienced homelessness.”

“I worked with The Magpie Project, a homeless shelter for women and children in Newham, East London, to create a new micro-opera through creative workshops, drawing musical inspiration from the time spent with the women and children, the conversations we had and the music we created

together. The new opera was called ‘Standing by the Thames’ and tells the story of two women sitting on either side of the river Thames who gradually form a connection. It portrays the sense of isolation which homelessness causes but also the inspiring presence of hope for a better future which many of the women at the Magpie Project expressed through the time we spent together. The project culminated in a performance in March 2023 at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, London with the Streetwise Opera performers, The Sixteen choir and the BBC Concert Orchestra.”

We’re so proud of our alumnae and all that they are doing. It’s lovely to follow their successes and support them.

You can view Electra’s website here:

<https://www.electraperivolariscomposer.com/>



Alumnae Events

Brenda Mordecai's Lunch

We were delighted to join some of our NGHS alumnae for a festive lunch last year. They've been friends since they started school in 1944! Over 70 years since they left school and they still enjoy getting together and reminiscing about their time at NGHS; it was a pleasure to be a part of it.



Alumnae Reunion January 2023

One of our favourite dates in the diary is welcoming our newest alumnae back to school. It was wonderful to have the Class of 2022 back in school in January to collect their A Level certificates and find out all about their adventures during their first term at university.



Alumnae Reunion May 2023

On a lovely, warm and sunny Saturday afternoon, we welcomed over 50 alumnae and former staff back to school for our annual reunion. This year we brought out our finest china and a selection of delicious sandwiches and cakes as we indulged in afternoon tea.

We had guests from the Class of 1955 right through to 2013. The Class of 1973 had a particularly special afternoon as they celebrated their 50 year leavers' anniversary!

Our Head, Mrs Keller, welcomed our guests with an introduction and a chat about how we're getting on as a school, our great success and the amazing things we're doing. Everybody had a lovely time catching up and chatting about the 'old' days and some of the naughty things they used to get up to! There was

archive material to look through which is always very popular. There's something quite special about finding yourself in old photographs.

Our Head Girl and Prefect Team were on hand to take guests on tours around the school once they'd enjoyed their tea. Miss Abbott from the PE Department also came along and helped out - some of the alumnae had been taught by her many years ago!

It's fair to say that they really enjoyed the afternoon and loved to see how the school had progressed academically AND structurally; they were particularly impressed by the amazing Performing Arts Centre and what a fantastic provision it is.

All in all it was a wonderful event with memories shared and new memories made. School days really are the best days of your life.





GDST Students at the Undivided Forum

GDST schools take Diversity and Inclusion very seriously, and we're extremely proud of our students, who continue to demonstrate their commitment to this important subject. This summer, students from across the network gathered at the GDST's head office in London to spend the day supporting each other in their ambitions to drive positive change in their schools and the wider world.

NGHS alumna, Sudha Kheterpal, delivered an empowering afternoon of workshops at the event. Sudha is an inspiring role model for all of us, and uses her wealth of experience in music, performance, entrepreneurship and communication to coach individuals looking to make a difference in the world. She is particularly passionate about supporting women, and especially women of colour, whose businesses are sadly often overlooked by investors. During the event, she

taught the students to identify the key qualities of some of the change-makers they most admire, such as Greta Thunberg and Malala Yousafzai. She also helped them to identify their own values and skills, before delivering interactive workshops that developed their confidence, communication skills and powers of persuasion.

It was wonderful to hear about all the great initiatives that students are already leading across the schools, including History and Heritage Clubs, Pride Festivals and the development of curriculum resources. It was also fantastic to see them working together to support each other's future ambitions, contributing new ideas and forming cross-school networks. GDST students never fail to impress us, and we were so thankful to work with NGHS alumna, Sudha, who is so determined to support the next generation of students following in her footsteps.



WHAT'S ON AT SQUIRE PAC



FOLK

**JACKIE OATES & JOHN SPIERS
IN CONCERT AT CHRISTMAS**
SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER 2023 AT 7:30PM



TALK

PETE WHITTAKER
THURSDAY 29 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7:30PM



COMEDY

ALFIE MOORE: A FACE FOR RADIO
SATURDAY 2 MARCH 2024 AT 7:30PM



TALK

HANS REY: MISHAPS & MAYHEM
FRIDAY 15 MARCH 2024 AT 7:30PM



FOLK

ELIZA CARTHY
FRIDAY 12 APRIL 2024 AT 7:30PM



FOLK

GOOD HABITS
THURSDAY 23 MAY 2024 AT 7:30PM



FOR MORE INFO & TICKETS VISIT
WWW.SQUIREPAC.CO.UK

9 ARBORETUM STREET, NOTTINGHAM, NG1 4JB **FREE PARKING**

OBITUARIES



Nansi Elizabeth Hannah

Some of you may remember teacher, Mrs Nansi Hannah, who sadly passed away at the age of 95 on 14 January 2023. Nansi taught Dance, Sport and Keep Fit, joining the school in the mid 60s. Her retirement was announced in the 1987 edition of the NGHS school magazine:

‘Mrs Hannah had been on the staff for 23 years as a teacher of dance, in the Junior School and in the Sixth form. Mrs Hannah also gave lessons in Badminton. Her lessons have been much enjoyed by generations of pupils and I know she is pleased that we shall continue to teach dance as part of the school curriculum.’



Heather Wallis

Heather Wallis, who died on 23 December 2022 aged 96, taught at Nottingham Girls' High School from the mid 1970s until she retired in 1986. She taught History and English and also set up our Careers Department.

Heather was born in 1926 and read History at London University. During World War II the course was moved to Cambridge where she also completed her teaching qualification.

Having been widowed early with a young family, Heather had firm views about girls receiving guidance about higher education and career choices which would develop and reinforce their independence. She began providing careers guidance at

her previous post at Loughton High School, Essex, and was involved with the developing the Careers Research Association, attending conferences and training sessions. On arrival at NGHS, Heather was tasked with setting up the Careers Advisory Service, working tirelessly on gathering information and arranging work placements for the pupils. The department expanded and flourished under her leadership, and those who worked with her, and those she taught, will remember her with gratitude and affection.

On her retirement Heather was involved in the establishment of the Former Staff Association. During her long retirement she volunteered as a guide at Kedleston Hall, sharing her historical knowledge with enthusiasm. She also had time to indulge her passions for gardening and sugar craft skills. Latterly she moved to Stamford to be nearer her family.

Written by Sue Folwell



Hilary English (née Cockfield)

Hilary sadly died on 28 May 2022 at the age of 77. She joined the school in 1953 and left in 1963 to go up to St Anne's College Oxford. Many people will remember both Hilary and her mother Ruth Cockfield who taught English at the school.

Written by Tessa Pyke, class of 1962.



Phyllis Sturgeon (née Harris)

We were sad to hear that Phyllis Sturgeon (née Harris) passed away on 7 December 2022. Phyllis attended NGHS from 1947 - 1954 and also taught at the school from 1995 - 1998. She was an integral part of the NGHS Old Girls' Association.

We were so pleased when Phyllis took part in our 'Treasured Moments' campaign back in 2019, to share her photos with our Junior School students who had written letters to members of our alumnae community.



Dave Lumb

Dave Lumb was a much loved and hugely respected teacher of English and Drama from 2006 - 2015. We were very sad to hear that he passed away peacefully in Norwich on 19 January 2023. He will be much missed by his wife Carolyn, his family and many good friends, especially those who shared his interests in books, bird watching and rugby. Thank you Mr Lumb for all the knowledge, humour and creativity you shared with our pupils over the years.



Pamela Mary Cox

Pam attended Nottingham Girls' High School from 1944 - 1951. After leaving NGHS, Pam gained a Pharmacy degree from Nottingham Trent University. Pam's commitment and contribution made to the pharmaceutical profession was remarkable - a Fellow / Member of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society for 66 years - she lived through many transformations of Pharmacy, worked in US and returned to the UK set up her

own pharmacy, Cox Pharmacy in Carlton, Nottingham.

Pam worked until she was 65 - her Father persuaded her that 60 was too early to retire and in retirement she continued to lead a busy full life including being a magistrate for many years and involved with many clubs and societies through which she had many friends. Pam remained cheerful and fiercely independent to the end and peacefully passed away on the 26th July 2023.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Diversity and Inclusion continue to be an important focus at NGHS. We are very proud of the way our students have embraced the many activities that take place in this area. We have seen some wonderful events and activities - once again this year.

The annual student survey has now become a regular feature in our calendar and will take place again in January 2024. Students from Year 5 upwards will complete an anonymous survey to tell us how they're feeling, whether they see themselves represented in the curriculum and if they feel a sense of belonging at school. The survey results inform our priorities for the year ahead, and there has been a particular emphasis on broadening the curriculum over the recent period.

In addition to our ongoing curriculum development, students enjoy many extra-curricular opportunities too. Our Inclusion Calendar, which marks special occasions across many cultures, religions and backgrounds, informs our assemblies and tutor

time activities. From Black History Month poetry competitions to assemblies celebrating neurodiverse music artists, there has been a lot to learn about and celebrate this year. Our lunchtime clubs are also an inspiring way for students to enjoy inclusive activities. Examples include the Anti-Racism Collective, Philosophy Club, Pride Club and Wellbeing Club. Both the Junior and Senior Libraries also have a wonderfully diverse range of books available for students to enjoy, from a wide range of authors, topics and characters. We want our students to love reading at NGHS, and our Libraries are second to none.

The Year 13 Diversity Prefects this year are Mia and Minal. Make sure to follow their Instagram account if you're on social media, [**@NGHS.Diversity**](#). They are wonderful students who help us all learn about a variety of different groups. They are excellent role models for our younger students, and encourage everyone to support each other across the NGHS community.





*you are
invited*

NGHS ALUMNAE REUNION

Saturday 11th May 2024

10:30am - 3:00pm

Calling all NGHS alumnae, we look forward to welcoming you back.
Tour the school and reminisce about your school days with friends.

For further details, contact FriendsofNGHS@not.gdst.net
or call 0115 941 7663

Book via the link or QR code: bit.ly/3FVOwle





BRIGHT GIRLS BRIGHT FUTURES

Bright Girls Bright Futures (BGBF) is our exciting new partnership that sees us working closely with gifted and talented girls from Jesse Gray Primary School and Dunkirk Primary School over the course of three years, in our step towards long-term sustainable cross-sector partnerships.

BGBF aims to inspire and empower gifted and talented girls with an interest in the STEM subjects to learn about the different career pathways and jobs available in STEM-related industries.

The partnership is based on a mentoring scheme between Year 8 NGHS pupils and Year 4 girls in the partner schools. Over the course of three years, all participants will receive a series of challenges designed and delivered by NGHS Outreach Coordinator and teacher of Mathematics, Miss Wendy Taylor. Challenges span codebreaking, robotics, computing, technology, and design, and have been carefully put together to showcase past and present women working in these areas, including national security, fashion, coding, dermatology and pharmaceuticals.

For NGHS pupils especially, this new partnership brings unique leadership opportunities. Those selected to be mentors are made up of Subject Scholars and pupils who have an appropriate skill set matched to encourage and support girls from the partner schools. Academic rigour, enthusiasm, effective communication and the ability to make others feel at ease, are all factors sought when selecting mentors for the programme, as Susie Edebali, Partnership Coordinator at NGHS highlights:

“We have a number of talented pupils on bursary places here at NGHS and we’re proud to be able to offer them leadership opportunities that develop confidence and self-esteem alongside an excellent academic experience.”

Outreach and Partnerships is an important part of NGHS’s embedded whole-school culture with girls taking up roles of responsibility at multiple levels, including the Junior School Tots Have Fun programme, Year 6 Tots Ambassadors, and Sixth Form Outreach Prefects.

In the GDST’s Girls’ Futures Report, girls nationally painted a picture of a life where they have control of how work intersects with home and family and where they can lead in a way that prioritises compassion and community. The report also found that 83% of girls wanted a job they enjoyed, and 66% wanted a job that made a difference to society¹. As experts in educating girls, this is no surprise – girls tend to work more collaboratively and are supportive of one another.

Recent research into female philanthropists also shows that women choose to invest in causes such as gender equality and sustainability to drive change² – indicating that girls and women make conscious decisions about how their actions can have a positive influence and impact on others.

As part of our philanthropic activity, the school is raising funds towards a Bright Girls Bright Futures bursary for girls enrolled on the programme. As Head Julie Keller, explains:

“We believe that bright girls should have access to an excellent education regardless of their sex, race, or social-economic circumstances, and we are so inspired to make this happen. The Bright Girls Bright Futures programme will not only challenge and push exceptionally bright and talented girls, but open doors to their extraordinary futures.”

1 The Girls’ Futures Report, 2022: Shaping Skills, Driving Confidence and Creating Leaders

2 Charities Aid Foundation, 2023: The crucial, growing role of women in philanthropy



CREATING EXTRAORDINARY FUTURES

As another extraordinary year passes at NGHS, we reflect on the philanthropic support of our donor community and how truly grateful we are. We are delighted that we have been able to award more bursaries to new, bright students and support them to attend NGHS. We continue with our commitment to raise vital funds for the Bursary and Assistance Fund, which we know has a huge impact on girls and their families and the future of girls accessing an NGHS education.

Philanthropy is a fundamental part of NGHS and we are grateful to all our donors, alumnae, former staff, former parents, current parents and current staff. Bursaries are our number one priority and we are pleased that 1 in 9 students at NGHS are now on a bursary award. We were delighted that this year we could award twelve new bursaries to bright girls in Year 7 and our Sixth Form.

The Opportunities Fund continues to allow our pupils to access extra curricular opportunities that initially may have been out of their reach. Seventeen girls have been able to visit Spain, Wales, France and the USA. The fund has also enabled two students to receive music tuition, who thoroughly enjoy contributing to the many bands and orchestras we have here at school. We are delighted that three students have completed their Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award and are looking to continue with the Duke of Edinburgh Programme again this year.

We were extremely pleased with the support for the Class of 2023 Bursary Appeal, as our Year 13's became alumnae of NGHS. We are grateful that our donor tree continues to grow with engraved leaves, an opportunity to leave a lasting legacy here at school.

I am so grateful to Aya, Class of 2022 who came forward to share her story. Aya was the first Peggy Mason bursary recipient. Peggy, class of 1939 an alumna and donor of the school left a bequest to NGHS which created an extraordinary future for Aya. Peggy was a true NGHS girl, a passionate believer in fairness. Confident and fearless, she was much respected in her community and amongst her many friends. Aya relished many opportunities during her time here in our Sixth Form. She has been fully involved in school life, and flourished because of it. Aya has big dreams; she wants to work for the United Nations in their Foreign Affairs Department. Peggy's gift has supported Aya giving her this extraordinary future.

As we look forward to celebrating 150 years of NGHS on 14th September 2025, we want to ensure we continue to build on creating extraordinary futures. We are passionate about giving every girl the support she needs to guide her in her personal journey through life, we know that our NGHS alumnae have a vital role to play in shaping it.

Every donation we receive does make a difference, so thank you.

Aisling Hooper

Philanthropy and Alumnae Manager

Contact details:

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FriendsofNGHS@not.gdst.net



THANK YOU




17
bursary students
supported by
the Opportunity
Fund

73
people made a gift
in 2022/23



9
alumnae in the
Minerva Circle

1 in 9
students at NGHS are on
a bursary



Class of 2023 leavers
deposits raised

£5,477




51
regular donors
support
our bursary
programme

You have helped raise

£82,717

for the NGHS Bursaries and the
Opportunity Fund in 2021/22




Our monthly direct debit
programme currently funds a

50%
bursary

12
bursaries awarded in 2022



STAY CONNECTED

Careers Talks

We've had some really interesting and inspiring Careers talks by some of our NGHS alumnae over the years. It's one of the most popular elements of our Careers provision as our current girls really do benefit from hearing how former pupils have successfully climbed the ladder in all manner of careers. There's nothing quite like hearing these details first hand, and if this is something you feel you could help us with we'd be delighted to hear from you. You may like to come into school to do a talk, or it could be done online where distance is no object. Either way it would be really helpful to our current pupils. If you'd like to get involved then please do just drop us an email to **FriendsofNGHS@not.gdst.net** and we'll get back in touch.

Memories and Archives

As you'll have seen throughout this issue and previous editions of Connect, a picture says a thousand words and invokes memories of times gone by. We value our archives and are extremely grateful for anything we have been sent which we can include in them, but we're always on the lookout for more. If you have any photographs or items from your time at the school, we'd love to see them and share them with the school community and at our annual reunion. You don't have to part with any treasured pictures, you can just take a photograph and send by email to **FriendsofNGHS@not.gdst.net** with any relevant dates and descriptions. Or if you're happy to pop anything in the post, we'll gladly receive it. Our alumnae like nothing more than a trip down memory lane.

Lifelong Connections

Do you ever look back at your NGHS days and wonder how your school friends are? Have you lost contact, or are you trying to track down an old friend who may have moved?

We often hear from alumnae wanting to get in touch with their classmates, reminisce about their school days or arrange a gathering for a particular celebration. If you are visiting friends or family in Nottingham and you have some free time and would love a look around the school again, you would of course be very welcome. Please do get in touch, as our Philanthropy and Alumnae Manager, Aisling Hooper would be delighted to help. Our doors are always open, and we look forward to welcoming many of you back for a reunion lunch on Saturday 11 May 2024; everyone is welcome.



BURSARIES

*Her future,
your gift*

AYA'S STORY

"Receiving the call to let me know that the bursary was mine left me feeling grateful and excited for everything NGHS could help me achieve. I was nervous to start at a new school, but everyone made me feel welcome; from the first day my teachers made me feel at ease.

I've had the opportunity to grow, academically and as a person, and build resilience. I took part in a debate club and was a member of the Law Society. I'm now thrilled to be in my second year studying Law with International Relations at the University of Plymouth.

Every contribution to the NGHS Bursary Fund is a contribution to the future. To those considering giving to the Fund, I ask that you do. It's more than money, it's an investment into what our future looks like; more women in the workforce, more women from diverse backgrounds and more women breaking the glass ceiling."

Aya Targoni, NGHS Class of 2022

LLB (LAW) LAW WITH INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



Scan to view
Aya's Story

Contact **Aisling Hooper**, A.Hooper@not.gdst.net to donate to support future bursaries at NGHS. No matter how big or small, every donation really does make a difference, **THANK YOU.**

Progressive. Creative. Different.



NOTTINGHAM
GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

G D S T
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

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