



## **Annual Report 2016-2017**

**By Laurette Thomas (Chair)**

The past year has been yet another success for the Parents' Association. We have worked extraordinarily hard as a team and are living proof of what can be achieved when you pull together with determination, good grace, and a cup of tea.

We have 370 parents on our volunteer database plus solid and supportive relationships with school staff and students.

The Association has continued to champion its three basic aims: fundraising, providing a refreshment service for school functions, and acting as a social platform for the parent body.

### ***Fundraising***

The headline figure tonight is the record-breaking £38,404 (£40,542.75 including donations made directly to school. \* See below.) profit made in the 12 months to July. Every penny of this has gone, or will be going, into the school's crucial Making Ends Meet fund.

We donated an astonishing £47,731 to school in 2016/17 following liaison with Stephen Locke (Bursar) and Shirley Park (from the Development Office).

At the very start of the accounting year we presented £21,568.13 to school which was made up of £13,118.13 for a computer room refit, the entire library budget for the past year of £6,000, Book Buzz for new Year 7s at £450 and this year's school planners costing £2,000.

In November the PE department benefitted from £1,674 for much needed new PE Mats and in January we wrote a very satisfying virtual cheque, thanks to online banking, for £14,464.05 to pay for the furniture in the new classrooms in the Outdoor Education Department, plus some crucial new IT licenses.

Our phenomenally successful Spring Fair in March raised all the funds (plus some!) needed to buy a £10,000 IT server. Whilst photographs of it with a beaming headmaster weren't all that exciting, the server is vital; keeping the IT system throughout Pate's up and running for students, staff and parents.

This year we asked the Student Council what they felt was needed to improve life at school. After much consideration from them and us, we donated £2,243.80 to purchase picnic tables for use at break and lunch times plus new bike racks.

In the past two days we have also donated another £12,500 for new tables and chairs in the refectory (£8,500), a spray gun for the art department (£231), this year's school planners (£2,050) and £1,893 for the Maths department to cover online subscriptions and the much

enjoyed UKMT challenges. These will appear in next year's accounts.

One of the main sources of income this year has been our bar sales which have not only cleared more than £10,500 but are integral to bringing Pate's parents together at school functions. Only last week at House Music we had 65 volunteers who served 1,000 students with drinks and sausages, and 1,200 parents and grandparents over three performances. It can be tiring and more than a tad manic at times but there is always time for much hilarity, a cup of tea and even some cake. Many parents tell me they are grateful for this rare opportunity to socialise at this level within a secondary school.

Key to Refreshments success has been the remarkable management and stock buying skills of committee members **Jane Kent and Mary Farquhar** who not only find the best priced stock (armed with a keen eye and supermarket vouchers) but deliver it straight to school, and kindly move it if we are based off site such as the Richard Pate's 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary concert at Gloucester Cathedral or the Choral Concert at All Saints Church.

With the fantastic help and support of the catering manager **Laura Davies** and her refectory team we have also continued to serve hundreds of hot dogs to students in between matinee and evening performances at House Drama and House Music.

Laura is always available for catering advice and guidance and takes control of any deliveries including three separate ice cream donations from a remarkably generous Y13 parent.

There are currently 23 events on the annual school calendar where we are on hand with drinks, snacks and/or homemade cake. In the past year there have been one-off special occasions including a concert by The Voice John James Newman. We also supported the 2<sup>nd</sup> Diwali celebration last October. We will be back to mark the Festival again on the 14<sup>th</sup> of this month to serve refreshments.

At many of these past events we have considerably boosted our fundraising with an array of raffles beautifully wrapped by parent **Kate Thomson**. Using donations from parents, and with **Sam Golding** leading the ticket selling team, the hampers have raised a staggering £3,771 this past year.

Our 100 Club, run effectively and with sleek good cheer by **Andrew Thomson**, continues to be an important source of income clearing £5,615 this past year. The search for new members is always on-going.

In December 2016 we held another record-breaking family quiz night, organised by committee vice chair **Carolyn Hopper** with **Mary Farquhar, Jane Kent and Tabitha Gilchrist** manning the bar. There were prizes, puzzles and picnics; the refectory was crammed full of competitors and once again a great time was had by all. We raised £1,666 from ticket sales, bar and raffle.

The Annual Spring Fair and Prize Draw in March was the most successful ever on every single front. **Shona Barnard and Corinne Phillimore** secured a great selection of prizes for the draw while **Becca Orum and Anne Casey**, galvanised and co-ordinated the year 7 & 8 stalls. The result was more students involved than ever before which added a joyous buzz to the whole event. **Natalie Towle** once again arranged for many external stall holders to attend and the IT department, inspired by **Jim Wain** ran a retro games arcade on the stage. With sky high raffle ticket sales we raised nearly £12,000 (more than £14,000 including donations from parents directly to school \* See below).

Our sales of Second-hand Uniform have improved once again this year. The remarkable **Bhavna Amlani**, has continued in her role of sorting and organising the uniform. She has been shadowed by Dawn Eccles who is ready to take over the cupboard keys! With sales at events throughout the year and through staff in the front office on a daily basis, plus parents emailing Bhavna and Dawn directly, it is not only a good fundraiser but also an excellent service for our parents. A new initiative to have the cupboard manned and open on certain afternoons has been a huge success. In the last year uniform sales, including a Bags2School initiative, raised in the region of £1,750.

A brand spanking new adventure, born of an idea from parents **Kate and Dave Carter**, led to a remarkable Back to School event in July, pulled together by **Carolyn Hopper** and school. Nearly 60 parents donned school uniform and came to Pate's for the day. Staff had given of their time to make sure "students" had a busy day which included History with Mr Ellicott, Computing with Mr Read, English with Mr Allinson and Physics with Mr Worth. A games lesson and lunchtime singing club with **Miss Lane** completed the school day which was followed by an 80s and 90s disco. The remarkable event, which it is hoped will be repeated one day, raised £3,143.

One final entrepreneurial endeavour which must be mentioned is that of parent **Laura Watts** who has purchased pencil cases and stationery in the colours of the five Houses. The sale of these continues to raise £100s for school plus delights our House proud students – no matter how grown up they are!

### ***Acknowledgements***

Firstly I want to thank the whole of the committee and our active members and volunteers for all they have done throughout the year.

Many have already been mentioned and I thank you all. But there are so many more people. Thanks must go to **Linda Arthur** our secretary – you, with your husband **Paul** (our official data officer) – have kept an air of sanity amidst madness, focussed on the crucial matters of email address and the volunteer Doodles, and kept the agendas and minutes moving forwards making sure we keep track of things.

And treasurer **Louisa Coley**, calm and together at all times, has kept the accounts firmly in order, reminding us regularly in hard facts and figures, how well we are all doing. **Ben Coley** is co-opted to the committee as media officer and taken everything from generating notices to newsletters to Pate's Progress completely in his stride. Thank you.

Specific thanks must also go to individual parents who have attended many committee meetings (held once every half term) and become crucial for the smooth running of events. These stalwarts are **Dawn Eccles, Anne Daly, and Tabitha Gilchrist**.

In addition to the Committee and our members there are also a number of school staff I must thank who are an important part of ensuring that the PA runs as smoothly as possible:

**Shirley Park** (PA link with the school) must be acknowledged for the fact that we really could not do anything without her. She attends every meeting and answers every email (even those at weekends and far too late at night to mention) with calm good cheer, answering questions, guiding and assisting wherever she can, and allowing us to make madcap ideas a reality. Thank You.

**Stephen Locke** (School Bursar) is also there at every meeting, offering his sage advice where asked and making the 100 Club draw with marvellous panache. He always makes us feel appreciated. Thank You Stephen.

Special thanks must go to caretakers **Anthony and Phil**, for lifting and carrying for us, locking up after us and being ready to guide us in the right direction.

Also to **Yvonne Shelmerdine, Fiona Hutton-Potts** and the team in the front office and reception for their warm assistance and support, and to **Pauline Mussi** and the finance department who keep on top of our payments to and from school.

I would like to thank **Russel Ellicott** for his constant support and promotion of the Parents' Association. So too to **Rachel Thorpe and other members of the Senior Leadership Team** who are always willing, with smiles on faces, to help if needed and make us feel valued and appreciated.

### ***Fond farewells***

It is with personal sadness and mountains of gratitude that tonight I/we say goodbye and Thank You to two committee members who have dedicated year after year to the Parents' Association both on and off the committee. Both **Jane Kent and Bhavna Amlani** have tonight retired as their children prepare to leave Pate's this year. Of all their many talents a couple of traits stand out for me in particular: their positive can-do approach to getting a job done, any job, is unparalleled, and their willingness to reach out in friendship is truly valued.

Among so many other things Bhavna has transformed the second-hand uniform service, set up a Bags 2 School fundraiser, has frequently headed up refreshment events, sold donations on e-Bay, and been a morale booster to one and all. Jane has devoted so many hours to the smooth running of the PA refreshment service it is hard to know where to start thanking her. From single-handedly managing all the recycling, setting up numerous events both in-school and off site, establishing and running the student sausage services at House Drama and House Music, making signs, tablecloths, buying stock and then moving it from A to B, and then back again, nothing is too challenging for Jane.

To both Bhavna and Jane I can say no more than a huge Thank You on behalf of us all.

### ***Looking Forward***

As we welcome two new committee members we know that at least three members of the committee, including myself, are likely to stand down next October. Having time to shadow different roles this coming year would be invaluable for our successors, so the search is underway. It was wonderful to see so many new Year 7 parents helping at House Music – they are the committee of the future.

That just leaves me to say a massive Thank You to every single person who has helped along the way. From cake bakers (of which we have many), cash counters and tea pourers to till experts, sausage servers and clearer-uppers: We've had yet another great year so let's chase down another.

See \* Addendum

Spring fair donations paid directly to school

£1,000 Commercial, £62.50, £500, £201.25 and £375: Total £2,138.75