

# The Old Thomasonian

Issue 3 | December 2023



## From the Editor

Welcome to the latest edition of 'The Old Thomasonian'. In this issue, we include messages and news from our current Heads, enjoy reflections from long-standing members of staff, and learn more about the work of Thomas's Foundation.

We also catch up with former pupils, finding out what they are up to now and whether their time at Thomas's has impacted their career and life choices in any way. For me, the 'Where Are They Now' articles have been a particular treat to read. How incredibly special to reconnect with pupils we taught decades ago, to learn that the broad curriculum has helped to encourage them into a myriad of careers and that the Thomas's Values are still pulsing through their adult veins!

Since our last newsletter was published, we have been busy organising reunion events in each of the Schools; you will find reports and photographs from these in the Events section below.

My thanks go to all those who have contributed articles and photographs to this edition, which I hope you will enjoy reading. We would love to hear from you so do keep in touch, send us your news and photographs ([alumni@thomas-s.co.uk](mailto:alumni@thomas-s.co.uk)), and please help to spread the 'alumni' word amongst your Thomas's contacts.

Best wishes from all of us at Thomas's:

**Nicola Diggle**

Alumni Development for TLDS and Alumni Lead - Battersea

**Helen Stewart-Morgan**

Alumni Lead - Clapham

**Andrea Street**

Alumni Lead - Fulham

**Allie Barnes-Wright**

Alumni Lead - Kensington



**THOMAS'S BATTERSEA**

**Ben Thomas**

Thomas's Battersea has emerged from an unsettled period, during which, in response to the relentless demands of high-stakes assessments at the age of 11, we initially sought to extend a Thomas's Battersea education to the age of 18. In pursuit of this aim a number of challenging twists and turns led to the establishment of Thomas's Putney Vale, which currently takes pupils through to the age of 16, and then to the recent announcement of Thomas's College, which will open in Richmond in September 2025 and will offer a Thomas's education to pupils aged 11 to 18.

In this context, as we re-set Thomas's Battersea as the prep school which you will know and (I hope!) love, I thought you might be interested in my welcome letter to parents at the start of this academic year, which I copy below.

Thank you so much to Miss Diggle for her sterling work in reconnecting us with our alumni. Do come back and visit us if you have not done so recently. You may find that the fabric of the school has changed a little - but I believe that you will recognise its spirit immediately.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



**THOMAS'S KENSINGTON**

**Kelly Miller**

I hope this letter finds you well and thriving in your respective endeavours. As we reflect on the cherished memories and formative experiences that bind us together as alumni of Thomas's Kensington, it brings me great pleasure to connect with each of you. Please find below my start of term letter to parents.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



**THOMAS'S CLAPHAM**

**Nathan Boller**

It was wonderful to see so many of you at Thomas's Clapham for our Alumni drinks event. Our Hall was filled with laughter and great excitement as past pupils, parents and teachers reconnected.

Please find below my Start of Term letter sent in September, that will give you a flavour of what has been going on recently at Thomas's Clapham. Whilst some of this may be school specific it will give you an insight into who we are and perhaps what has changed since your time at Thomas's Clapham.

We look forward to the next Alumni event and hope to see many of you there.

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**THOMAS'S FULHAM**  
**Annette Dobson**

At the end of last academic year, which was another dynamic, rewarding and fulfilling year, we welcomed a group of former pupils and parents back to school for an alumni event. We enjoyed a joyful evening reconnecting and sharing tales of time at Thomas's Fulham and catching up on what has happened since they left us. We look forward to this becoming an annual event.

Many aspects of life at Fulham have remained the same as in our trailblazing first few years, most particularly our focus on values.

Recently I recorded a podcast with a group of Year 5 pupils. They provided me with a list of questions ahead of time, some easier to answer than others. I told them about my pesky childhood pet, a Welsh Springer Spaniel called Ben and the reasons behind the choice of spider, owl, monkey and chameleon as animal characters associated with our four learning habits: thinking, questioning, linking and resilience. But, the question that perhaps made me think the hardest was 'which are your three favourite school values?' I settled on kindness, which the podcast hosts agreed with, and then humility and respect.

'What do you like most about Thomas's Fulham?' got me thinking; it is hard to narrow it down to one thing. In the end, I answered our sense of community to the nodding approval of my interviewers.

Community and connection are very important to us and our burgeoning alumni organisation is adding another valued element to who we are as a school. Andrea Street, one of our original Thomas's Fulham teachers, is working with Nicola Diggle to grow and connect our alumni and they are doing a fabulous job. Hearing news of our ex pupils, staff and parents is always a joy and we look forward to welcoming them all back to Fulham in the near future.

Here follows a piece about our recent 'Parent Pop Ups', a new and flourishing initiative.

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**THOMAS'S PUTNEY VALE**  
**Therese Andrews  
and Emma Oliver**

Better never stops! Putney Vale Senior School welcomed its inaugural Year 9 cohort in September 2021. Now in Year 11, these pupils will be the first Thomas's students to sit their GCSE examinations, marking a milestone in Thomas's educational history.

Click below to meet the Heads and find out more about their aims and ambitions for the pupils in their care.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



# Where are they now?



## THOMAS'S BATTERSEA

### Arabella Hodgkinson

#### Class of 1999

Bella joined Thomas's Battersea at the beginning of Year 5 in September 1995, quickly making her mark in the Music and Sport Departments. She was the only girl to play for the 1st XI Cricket Team, quite an achievement in those days! After university, Bella embarked on a career path which has seen her living Thomas's Values to the full. In this article, she reflects on her time at Battersea and how she came to work for various charities across the World.

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## THOMAS'S CLAPHAM

### Cameron Maung-Maung

#### Class of 2016

Cameron experienced the full nine years at Thomas's Clapham. It was here that he developed a passion for Football and by the time he left the school, at the end of Year 8, he already knew that he was destined for a life dedicated to the sport. Here, Cameron looks back at his Thomas's days, reflects on favourite memories and gives thanks to those who helped to shape his future career path.

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# Where are they now?



## THOMAS'S FULHAM

### Douglas Harrod Class of 2021

Douglas was amongst the first Reception intake when Thomas's Fulham opened its doors in September 2005. He remained at the school until the middle of Year 6, when his family moved to Australia. In this article, Douglas looks back on his time at Fulham and, since leaving London, on his education in Australia.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

## THOMAS'S KENSINGTON

### Louis Cunningham Class of 2009

Louis spent 7 years at Thomas's Kensington, from September 2002 until July 2009. In this reflection, Louis looks back on his time at Thomas's with great affection. He gives thanks to his teachers and credits his role in the Reception Nativity Play for planting the seeds of his love of performance and for the development of his highly successful acting career.

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# Thomas's Schools, what do you remember?



**THOMAS'S BATTERSEA**

**Roland Scaife**

**1987 to 2022**

Mr Scaife made an impact on scores of young people during his 35 year tenure at Thomas's Battersea. Apart from being Head of History and Senior Master for much of this time, he also taught Latin, and (once upon a time) some English and Religious Studies. Many of those credit him for fostering in them an intellectual hunger, enquiring mind and love of learning. When past alumni and recent pupils revisit the school, Mr Scaife is always one of the first teachers they ask after. Roland's wonderful turn of phrase and renowned use of analogy are used to great effect in this vivid reflection of his time at the School.

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**THOMAS'S CLAPHAM**

**Gary Evans**

**1996 to 2022**

Much loved Gary Evans arrived to teach Latin at Thomas's Clapham in September 1996 until a life in the country called him away from his post of Senior Master (later, Future Schools Support) in 2022. His mellifluous voice around school and prowess on 'the decks' at Bonfire Night are still missed, but never forgotten. Here, Gary recalls some particularly fond memories of his time at the School.

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# Thomas's Schools, what do you remember?



## THOMAS'S CLAPHAM & FULHAM

### Olga Houghton

**2003 to 2013**

Olga's decade (2003-2013) at Thomas's was split between two sites: first as a class teacher at Clapham and then as Head of Art at Fulham. Olga considers her time at Thomas's to have been extremely formative in terms of shaping her as a teacher and person; she looks back on her time at the Schools with great fondness. Olga is currently Head of Art at Highfield School in Hampshire.

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## THOMAS'S KENSINGTON

### Gayle Grant

**2007 to 2016**

'Miss Young' arrived at Thomas's Kensington in 2007 where she rose to become Deputy Head Academic, before leaving in 2017 to start her own family. In this article, Gayle looks back on her time at Kensington with great pride and fondness and particularly remembers how 'Being Kind' was firmly embedded in all that went on at the School.

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(CIO) Registered Charity No. 1181145

At Thomas's Foundation we are driven by the belief that every child deserves an enriching education. Our mission is to take that beyond Thomas's schools, into our local neighbourhoods and also into the rural communities of Nepal.

We share our values with Thomas's London Day Schools and work closely with the Thomas's community. The work of Thomas's Foundation has a measurable impact on young lives. The summary below gives you some insight into the depth and breadth of support Thomas's Foundation is able to offer, through the kind and generous support of the Thomas's community.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

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Many Battersea alumni will look back fondly on the time they spent at The Katherine Low Settlement, as part of their Post 11+ Programme. They used to walk to the centre (which is located further down Battersea High Street) in pairs and took turns to work with the babies and young children in the crèche and to help cook and lay the tables for the Pensioners' Lunch Club, entertaining them afterwards with quizzes, bingo, songs and dances!

KLS aims to foster community, promote empowerment, tackle poverty and reduce isolation (do watch [this](#) short, uplifting clip, recently filmed after the Chief Executive was interviewed by London Live), and the centre celebrates its centenary next year. As part of the festivities, they will be holding a 'Street Party Extravaganza' to which all alumni are warmly invited. Please click below for more information about Katherine Low and the event.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



# Alumni Breakfasts



Last term, the four Schools thoroughly enjoyed opening their doors to former pupils, parents and staff, inviting them to return to their former schools, meet up with old friends and colleagues, tour their old classrooms and enjoy being entertained by current pupils, reminding them of their own Thomas's journeys. Please find below a selection of event reports and photographs for you to enjoy.



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The breakfasts were well attended but it was clear that there was much appetite, particularly amongst our former pupils, for early evening events. In response to this, we decided to hold 'After Work Drinks' at all four Schools. The recent Clapham and Battersea events were a huge success (photographs and reports to follow in the next issue of 'The Old Thomasonian') and we look forward to those to be held at the other Schools:

**Thomas's Kensington - 7th February 2024 (6.30pm-8pm)**

**Thomas's Clapham - 2nd November 2024 (6.30pm-8pm)**

**Thomas's Battersea - 16th November 2024 (6.30pm-8pm)**

**Thomas's Fulham - Summer term (date tbc)**

These events are open to all former staff, pupils born on or before 31st August 2005, and parents who left Thomas's before July 2020. Formal invitations will be sent out to all registered alumni nearer the time of the events, but please do 'save the date' for the Kensington event and keep an eye out for the Fulham date, which will be posted on the Events section of the website next term.

# Alumni Breakfasts



In this edition, we celebrate Alumni Section 24 (former pupils born between 1st September 1994 and 31st August 1995). Here they are back in the day! Recognise any familiar faces? (Thomas's Fulham is not represented in Alumni Section 24 as the School only opened in September 2005).



Clapham Alumni Section  
24 - Year 8 Leavers (2008)



Battersea Alumni Section  
24 - 4BE 2004



Battersea Alumni Section  
24 - 4BN 2004



Battersea Alumni Section  
24 - 4BS 2004



Thomas's Kensington Alumni  
Section 24 - Year 1 2021

This newsletter can only be sent out to our registered alumni. Please do forward it onto anybody who you think might be interested and encourage them to join Thomas's Alumni themselves:

Thomas's Alumni - Former Pupil Registration

Thomas's Alumni - Former Parent Registration

Thomas's Alumni - Former Staff Registration