

Matthew Hagger, Part 2: introductions to speakers and conclusion on 1 July

I hope you have had the chance to wander around the school and take in the memorabilia that we have gathered together. I should just comment on the lunch today as it really isn't easy feeding so many people in a tent on a field to such a high level of quality. Teams of our in-house caterers have spent many hours cooking and preparing what we have eaten today and I would like to thank them for their work.

Now comes a very interesting part to the afternoon where we get to share some memories from across the decades with you to give you a further insight into just how special Oaklands is to us all.

Although my father, Nicholas Hagger, has taken a step back over the years from the day to day running of the schools, his writing is as prolific as ever. Fresh from the publication only in May of his latest masterpiece, *A View of Epping Forest*, please welcome him to share with you his memories of Oaklands as pupil here in the 1940s.

Carol Norris joined Oaklands as a member of staff in 1968 and sent her daughter, Libby here from 1967 to 1974. She is the longest-serving member of staff at Oaklands and will have put in 45 years before she finally retires in July next year. She spent many years with Miss Lord, so please welcome to share her memories, Carol.

Part of the uniqueness of Oaklands is that there have only been two sets of owners in all 75 years. I was only a young boy when we moved to Loughton in 1982 and took over from Miss Lord, but still remember vividly the long evenings and weekends spent then and throughout the 80s helping behind the scenes with whatever needed doing. I'd like to welcome back to share his memories of those pivotal years, my father Nicholas.

I joined the schools in July 2001 and have overseen many changes as we've followed the demands of modern-day schooling as dictated by the Department for Education, Ofsted, Inspection Teams and new generations of parents. With three schools to oversee we appointed a first rate Headmistress with a proven track record in January 2002 who spent nearly ten years with us before her retirement last year. Please welcome to share some of her memories, Pam Simmonds.

Oaklands has developed year after year throughout the decades as the curriculum has been enhanced, buildings have been added, resources purchased and staffing increased and our role as proprietors over the last 30 years has been to ensure that the changes benefit the children without detracting from our unique ethos. We will be building again this summer as in less than two weeks the conservatory on the House will be flattened to make way for a two-storey extension to further enhance our facilities. For all of our behind the scenes work, it is the pupils and staff that help to create such a friendly, family atmosphere that has been in place from 1937 and continues to this day.

Today has been about two things. Of course, the Anniversary is to celebrate the school's 75 years providing an outstanding education to local children. The second part is to get back in touch with ex pupils and staff from across the decades and to form an alumni association where news and information can be spread through the technologies so readily available in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This Anniversary marks the forming of the Old Oaklandians Association and the registration forms that past pupils and staff completed on entry will give us much information with which to start.

And now enough from me. This is the bit that feels more like a wedding. We have this wonderful cake that needs cutting. My mother, who was Principal and Headmistress from 1982 until 1996, has volunteered to make the first cut. So please welcome Ann Hagger.

This concludes the formal part of this afternoon. Cake will be served in due course but do feel free to wander, catch up or take one last look at the school before the afternoon closes at around 4pm.

One last time, thank you all for coming.