

BFES/SCEA Association Email Bulletin

July 2023



From: Membership Secretary
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First thoughts:

The latest issue of the Journal will be on its way to you soon – and as usual, Tom has managed to fill it with interesting articles that jog the memory. If like us, you like to read on even if the articles relate to a different era or place from the one you worked in, there are enough similarities to make the mind tick over and say “Ah! That was the same sort of experience we had, but in XX !” or “Thank goodness, things had changed by the time we were there!”

We hope that you enjoy reading, just as we did!



AGM and Lunch Event – Friday 22nd September, 2023

Do not worry if you think that you have missed the Booking Form for this event! It has not been sent out yet but will be with you soon.

In the meantime, save the date and get ready to fill in the booking form. As a quick reminder and for new members, the basic details are:

- Date:** Friday 22nd September 2023
- Where:** RAF Club, 128 Piccadilly, London
- Included:** Lunch; Tour of the Grade II listed building; guest speaker; Short AGM Meeting



Researching families:

You might be interested in reading an article written by Grace Huxford published online by the Cambridge University Press entitled **“There is No Icebreaker like a Tiny Child’: Reuniting British Military Families in Cold War Germany.”** This is part of a wider focus on the ‘special issue’ of families in twentieth-century Europe, and examines ‘family reunion’ in the immediate post-Second World War period, using military families in Germany as its main case study. It explores the choices made by military families and their experiences in post-war Germany, engaging with existing research in this area. There is a link to the article on the Association’s website: <https://www.bfposchools.co.uk/archivepart2>



More Focus on Münster:

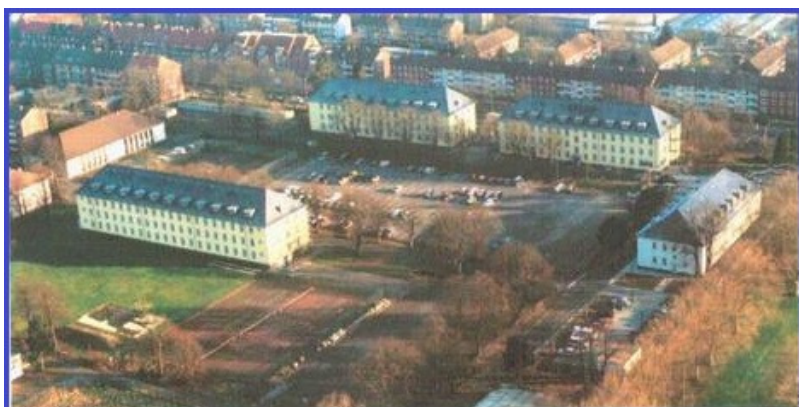
Member Helen Wilson sent in her recollections of teaching at Edinburgh School in Munster during the years 1978-1982:

"I read with interest John Bastable's comments about housing in Muenster in the last Bulletin. Married quarters in Havixbeck were very nice modern family houses. However, when I first went to Muenster housing for single teachers was very different!

Having spent 5 very happy years at Tal Handaq School in Malta, on the closure of the schools in 1978 I was offered the post of HOD Home Economics at Edinburgh School in Muenster. Muenster is an attractive white collar city with a lake, the Aasee, and an historical centre. The centre of the city always reminded me of Oxford or Cambridge. Edinburgh School, on the outskirts of Muenster, was based at Nelson Barracks, a former German Barracks. The School was housed in four buildings around a parade square, a large hall and gymnasium completed the rectangle. There was a busy main dual carriageway road outside and barbed wire atop a high mesh fence around the perimeter of the Barracks to keep out unwanted visitors (or the children in?!).

There were approximately 500 pupils drawn from the army garrisons in Muenster and from Osnabrueck. The Home Economics Department was made up of myself and Marion Anderson who taught the Textiles element of the curriculum. We both started at Edinburgh School at the same time so had the opportunity to shape the Department in the way we wanted.

As a single teacher, and very independent, it was a culture shock for me having left my large 4 bedroomed flat in Malta, to be given one room measuring 22 x 11ft overlooking the barbed wire and road in the Single Teachers' Accommodation above the administration block of Edinburgh School. The White Horse Teachers' Mess was housed in what had been the Officers' Mess for the German Army 100 yards down the road. A road which had to be crossed, at every meal time. There was no chance of moving out into a flat as, at that time, no rent allowance was available. (Compare this to the housing allocated to married teachers!) After a few months I chose to move out of the Mess and pay for my own flat in Munster, fortunately after a short while rent allowances became available. Later I was able to move to a 'misappropriated' married quarter, a flat in a block which after, much negotiation, was made available to single teachers in the small village of Roxel. (*The negotiations would make for a whole other article!*)



Edinburgh School, Nelson Barracks, Munster

Edinburgh School formed part of Nelson Barracks. There was the administration (and accommodation block), the dining room in a separate block at one end, a classroom block, and a block which housed the Science Department, Home Economics Department, and the Art Department. The remaining block was a relatively modern glass fronted Gym and School Hall. The Home Economics Department rooms were well equipped. At one time we opened a restaurant in a small room opposite the

Department this was open once a week, run by our City and Guilds Catering Students, and a popular alternative to school dinners. Apart from our normal curriculum the Department was also involved in catering for school visitors and events, and in making costumes for school plays. We also took groups to the weekly farmers' market when we found that very few of our pupils had ever been into the centre of Muenster.

My time in Muenster coincided with the time of IRA activity. Anyone who was in Germany during this time will be very familiar with the precautions one needed to take, and the effect that it had on life and work in Germany. I remember crawling across my living room floor one night because I had forgotten to close the curtains before

it got dark, only to realise that I was the only English resident of a high rise block of flats and no one was going to see me! However there were two incidents that were not funny at all. On the first occasion I had to give evidence to the Military police because I had been in the area of a shooting on my way to a parents' evening. On the second occasion I drove to school and realised that the front of the Gym and Hall were no longer there, the windows had been blown out by a bomb intended to catch the emergency services when they attended a bomb warning at the post office sorting office behind school. Fortunately the bomb mistimed and no one was injured.

After four years at Edinburgh School, in 1982, I was appointed as HOD Home Economics at Kent School in Waldniel near JHQ Rheindahlen, another big change in School and area.

I joined SCEA on an initial contract for three years, it was always made clear that SCEA was not a career service. However, I was lucky enough to be promoted during contracts, to have a career with SCEA which spanned 25 years and had the opportunity to teach children from all branches of the Services, Navy, Army and Air Force, to make lifelong friends and to have many happy memories of my time in Malta and Germany."



A Quiz for July:

We haven't had a quiz for a couple of months, so here is an easy one! All the answers to these clues start with the letter "J" – answers next month!

1. The Roman leader who gave this month its name.
2. A popular dance from the 1940s.
3. This English doctor is called "the father of immunology" because he introduced vaccination against smallpox.
4. The name for a large rally of Scouts or Guides.
5. A religious order set up by Ignatius Loyola in 1540.
6. A French way to cut vegetables, usually carrots.
7. A fast growing tropical Asian fruit, a species of fig, mulberry and breadfruit tree.
8. Capital of Indonesia.
9. Native cat of the Americas, or perhaps a luxury car.
10. Lewis Carroll wrote this nonsense poem for "Through the looking glass".



In remembrance – Tourex

You might already have visited the Tourex page on our website, where obituaries are posted about the death of members and others connected with the Association. The obituaries are a permanent reminder of members passed on. If you do visit the Tourex page, you will see brief notices, but if the name is blue, click to open up for a fuller obituary.

It is always a sad occasion to receive such news, but it feels a positive step to commemorate their lives and service to education by remembering them in this way.

The last page in this month's Bulletin remembers two members with great affection and respect. Thank you to colleagues and friends for keeping us informed and helping us to remember them in this way.

Spotlight on Members: In Remembrance:



Elizabeth (Beth) Morris:

Sadly, Olwen Powell has reported the death of her friend, Beth Morris, on 13th June 2023. Beth suffered a second brain haemorrhage in Cyprus which led to her passing.

Beth Morris (nee Bird) joined BFES in 1978 working in Herford, Hannover, Rheindahlen and of course in UK after her husband Paul left the army. Her last teaching post before her retirement was as Head of Pre Prep at Walhampton School in Lymington. Even when she retired to Cyprus she couldn't leave education behind, becoming the Safeguarding Governor at St John's School, Episkopi. She will be sadly missed by her friends and colleagues.

Pat Williams:

Last month, there was a brief notice about Pat Williams, who died recently. Walter Lewis wanted to say more about Pat:

"Pat Williams was the best deputy headteacher I have had the pleasure of working with. She was the deputy head of Cheshire Middle School, RAF Bruggen when I was there between 1977 and 1981.

Pat, and Norah Harkness, who was the Year 8 Coordinator (new concept in the 1970s!), were among the first secondary school teachers to have bought into this new concept of the 9 to 13 Middle School; in my mind one of the best educational concepts that I have experienced. They ran a tight but caring ship; the school was a joy to work in, being well respected by the RAF personnel. Under the headteacher, Peter MacDonald-Pierce, Pat Williams was the glue that held this new mix of primary and secondary teachers together in such a successful way.



Among the many great characters working at Cheshire Middle was one Heathcliff Moss (yes I know his name was as much a surprise as his delightful contribution to staff morale!). He became married whilst at Cheshire and all the male staff took Heathcliff out one night to celebrate his coming marriage; we went to a Gaststadt in the woods near Bruggen - it was a late night. The following morning's assembly was summed up by a rather delicate headteacher with "I'm sure that I have much to say to you this morning but it will have to wait until next week;" at which point Pat Williams, leading by example, took over and arranged for many of our female colleagues to cover male teachers lessons until morning break!

I hope that this will help inform you what a thorough and caring professional Pat Williams was; one of the best."

And so, goodbye:

Best wishes

Hugh and Christine Ritchie
Membership Secretaries
