

Welcome to the June 2008 Alumni Newsletter.

The email distribution of the last Newsletter in December seems to have been much more successful than the first attempt. There were a few bounced back returns but not many and the responses confirmed that email really does allow us to keep in touch with the very scattered Fyling Hall community. To illustrate this within a very short space of time we heard back from **J.C. Spender** (1945-50) in New York, **Tony Rothwell** in Washington DC, **Jane Hall-Parker** (1971-77) in Guam, **Joanne Cockill** (here in the 1970s) in California and **Paul Howe** (1964-70) in Zambia as well as others closer to home. Several of those contacting us spoke of forwarding the Newsletter to relatives and friends who were also Fyling Hall Alumni, another facility that email makes so easy.

Recently we had a visit from **Jane Barras** (1950-56), a contemporary of **Gavin Jones** (1948-53), she recalled a Fyling Hall world that included organised midnight feasts at the end of terms and cooking whelks picked from the beach, until stopped by Captain Flood. She also spent one night in the hayloft after being locked out by Mab Bradley. Just around locking up time Jane had crept out of Main House to look for her tennis ball that someone had thrown out of her dorm onto the terrace. Frightened of getting into trouble and wary that Mab's dogs, who slept in the hall, would bark if she tried to get back into the House, she decided the best option was a night in the hayloft.

Please do keep in touch and stories and pictures are always welcome.

John Jeakins

Captain Flood

After the last newsletter **Peter Martin** sent a photograph of Captain Flood (staff member 1946-63).



Flood was an extraordinary, dominating and controversial figure in his time at Fyling Hall. Also a very mysterious figure. Legends have congregated around him.

Had he really a degree from Salamanca University? Had he really fought for Franco in the Spanish Civil war? Almost everything about him seems equivocal. He proclaimed himself a Catholic but **Arthur Jones** (staff member & headmaster) told me in the 1970s that when, many years before, Flood's parents had visited the school his mother had told Arthur, 'He is no more Catholic than my cat.'

His book plate proudly stated: 'Captain William A. S. Flood OBE; MC of Kintradwell' together with an elaborate Coat of Arms.

Once he had left Fyling Hall he went on to Hydesville Towers where he married the owner and became Headmaster. In recent years he was still listed as a 'milestone' in the school's history. Whilst there he was known as 'Dr Flood'.

Whatever the truth about this extraordinary man his influence at Fyling Hall was undeniable. **Graham Gibb's** (1957-61) autobiographical account of his years at Fyling Hall is filled with Flood memories including his liberal use of the cane (or in this case riding crop): "Assume the Position!". The "Position" of course was to touch your toes, without bending your knees and stay there. Whack!, the riding crop came across my backside with such force I wanted to cry out. There was, however, one cardinal rule amongst all students, under no circumstances cry out during a beating or show you are crying. You held out until you were out of the room....This was my first, but not my last beating. I averaged about two each year, my fault for getting caught." It would be interesting if anyone could shed more light of the truth behind the legends. (John Jeakins)

Coast to Coast

Former pupils Jamie Noon and Steven Allen will mountain bike coast to coast for The British Heart Foundation this July. The pair and fellow riders (Dave & Andrew Harrison) will ride the undulating 210 miles from St Bees in Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay over four days starting on the 7th of July.

The now Head of Games at Fyling Hall said "Myself and Jamie have been talking about doing this ride for a while but finding time around his rugby commitments has been difficult. The loss of Jamie's nana to heart-related problems and his dad's recent heart attack made the selection of The British Heart Foundation an easy one. Although the ride will be a big challenge we are determined to ride into Robin Hood's Bay on the Thursday and raise as much

money as possible for a charity which is close to both our hearts. People have already been very generous offering support and sponsorship but we are looking to raise as much as possible so any further sponsorship would be welcome."

To sponsor Jamie and Steven either contact them on s.allen@fylinghall.org or log onto www.justgiving.com/jamiemoon and follow the instructions.

Alex Bennett (1989-92)



Congratulations to Alex who was the first British competitor home in a demanding 3000 mile solo yacht race. He came sixth overall in the Plymouth to Boston Artemis Tansjet yacht race. In an interview for the Whitby Gazette he said it was one of the fastest races he had ever done. "The North Atlantic is a very difficult and unforgiving place and to be able to race across it and finish a race like that gives you a great sense of personal achievement." His main difficulties were getting the right amount of sleep and surviving off basic rations. "A lot of the race is spent in a semi zombie state somewhere between being awake and asleep – solo sailing is like that."

School News

Up to date school news is on the school website (www.fylinghall.org). Do look at it to see all the developments taking place under the new Headmaster, Ken James who started this term.