

ISSUE 62 | SUMMER 2022

ASSOCIATES NEWS



ASCL Association
of School and
College Leaders

Cover image credit:
Parham Airfield Museum.

Behind the scenes at the museum

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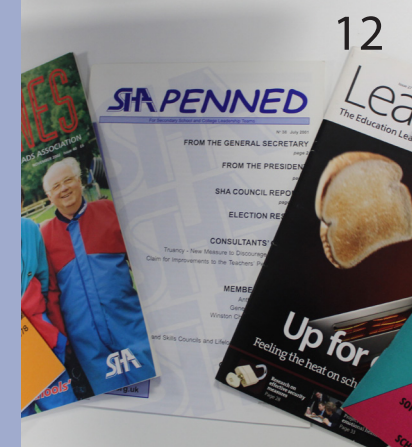
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THE GOOD WORTH WORKING FOR

From budgetary constraints to Covid, heads have never been under such pressure, so it's time to focus on all the good they do, says Geoff Barton

"Don't bring negative to my door," said the great American writer Maya Angelou.

That, sometimes, feels easier said than done.

After all, we find ourselves living through a phase when negativity can seem all-consuming – an unspeakable war in Europe, UK poverty on the rampage, integrity in public service often denigrated and burgeoning concerns about young people's emotional and mental health.

Negative didn't just come to the door. It smashed its way in.

And yet, as another great writer, Seamus Heaney, wrote: "Hope is not optimism which expects things to turn out well, but something rooted in the conviction that there is good worth working for."

And that's what I see across our schools and colleges of all types – the hope that comes from working with young people and helping to shape their future. It's the good worth working for.

I saw the same spirit recently during a meeting of the Associates Committee – this is the team who represent you, plan your activities, webinars and events, and who bring you Associates News.

We spent much of the time exploring what we currently provide for Associate members and how we can develop our offer, whether through specific advice and guidance, seminars, professional learning or communications.

At the end we said goodbye to four colleagues who are moving on from the committee after distinguished years of service: Tony Richardson, Christine Shellard, Paul Baker and Philip Johnston.

As they reminisced about what drew them to join the Association, it was overwhelmingly the sense of fellowship which was deemed the hallmark of what they had gained from being members.

Similarly, many of our members call or write to us simply because they need to offload and talk to someone who

is at arm's length from their school or college but who has had a role like theirs, has walked in their shoes.

Here, for example, is a message that has just come in:

Dear Geoff,

I apologise for this message. I hope somehow it does arrive in your inbox, forwarded by one of your team. I have no doubt that most days you receive Ofsted stories and experiences and here is another. I am using it as therapy after what was a brutal inspection for me and perhaps one of the most upsetting moments in my career . . .

It goes on to catalogue an inspection process which – even for this seasoned headteacher – leaves her doubting herself and contemplating leaving her role.

Of course, we expect any leadership role in any era to carry its fair share of pressure. And imposter syndrome is never far from the surface.



But with a government setting out its supposed vision for education up to 2030 in a new White Paper and Schools Bill, emails like the one above help to strengthen our resolve in arguing for what the priorities should really be:

- Recruiting and retaining great teachers especially to the areas of disadvantage that need them most.
- Having a rich and broad curriculum which leads to a fairer assessment system.

'I am using you as therapy'

- Treating the leaders of our schools and colleges in a way that recognises their extraordinary commitment to young people and their communities.

Covid has revealed some sordid examples of how public office in the political sphere is too often devalued but has also shone a spotlight on the public servants who tirelessly oversee the nation's schools and colleges.

And – just like those members of the Associates Committee I thanked recently – what they, like you, exemplify are extraordinary reserves of resilience, humanity and, yes, hope.

POLICY: BEYOND THE PANDEMIC

Covid issues continue but Schools Bill and SEND plans are next key areas, says Julie McCulloch

ASCL continues to talk to policymakers and other stakeholders about the ongoing pandemic-related issues, including Covid measures themselves and the impact of this period of disruption on exams and performance tables.

Meanwhile, looking to the future, the policy team has focused on the recently-published schools white paper – the foundation of the Schools Bill announced in the Queen's Speech in May – and the SEND green paper.

Together with the government's already published 'levelling up' white paper, these papers will set the course for the rest of this Parliament. They include proposals for how the government will achieve its vision of all schools being part of strong trusts, as well as a strong focus on literacy and numeracy.

Our response to the white paper and Bill makes clear that, while we think they lack ambition, some of the specific measures are welcome, including plans to tackle the problem of unregistered schools where action is long overdue.

The details are here www.ascl.org.uk/News/Our-news-and-press-releases

We were involved in numerous conversations with ministers and officials about these policy proposals. We encouraged the government to consider the recommendations in our Blueprint and were pleased at the reception.

We also submitted three detailed papers to the teams working on the white paper and SEND review – one on high needs funding, on one system reform ('all schools in trusts') and one on the curriculum.

Otherwise, we have contributed to the government's thinking on system reform by hosting three roundtable discussions between ASCL members and the Minister for the School System, Baroness Barran. These discussions were with ASCL's Trust Leadership Advisory Group, and with groups of members leading maintained schools and single academy trusts. This helped to ensure the Department for Education heard from a range of voices.



Other topics include:

- **Ofsted inspections:** Our position on Ofsted inspections remains the same while pandemic-related disruption continues: all requests for deferral from schools and colleges which continue to undergo significant disruption should be granted, unless an inspection has been triggered by safeguarding concerns.
- **Performance tables:** It is the strong view of our members that KS4 and 5 performance tables in their usual form should not be published this year. Frustratingly, this appears to be falling on deaf ears in government.
- **Engagement with the Opposition:** We are continuing to build a strong relationship with the Shadow Secretary of State Bridget Phillipson and her team. They were very grateful for the opportunity for her to address delegates at our annual conference and for the private session with Council members afterwards. We are building on this to work with Labour as they develop their policy positions ahead of the next General Election.



Podcast highlights

ASCL's podcasts series continues to expand

In the Leadership podcast, Geoff Barton talks to Professor Robin Alexander, author of *Education in Spite of Policy* and *A Dialogic Teaching Companion*

They discuss how conversation in the classroom between teacher and pupils and between pupils can be such a powerful form of learning and explore why politicians cleave to imposing initiatives, rather than learning the lessons of history and evidence.

Geoff also talks to Bridget Phillipson, Shadow Secretary of State for Education, about the Labour Party's education priorities

Ms Phillipson, who spoke at the ASCL annual conference in March, said that when she visited schools, she was struck by how ambitious teachers and leaders were for children.

"I think it's up to a government to match that ambition with the change we need to see."

Her focus would be on "standards not structures," for schools, she added.

Elsewhere, in Leaders are Readers, Geoff hears from heads and others who have recently put pen to paper to write on themes ranging from curriculum and school improvement

to worklife balance and improving the image of teaching. Interviewees include Mary Myatt and John Tomsett, Sir Tim Brighouse and Toby Salt.

Other podcast series include the Business Brunch with Hayley Dunn, Louise Hatswell and Julia Harnden, all former school business leaders, whose recent editions have looked at how policy announcements on SEND and reforms to all schools will affect bursars and business managers and whether the sustainability agenda is being sufficiently included in plans for change.

To listen, go to www.ascl.org.uk/Podcasts

SURVEY

Marketing: Associates survey on the way

ASCL's marketing team is to canvass associate members for their views on extra services the association could provide for them.

A questionnaire will be going out in summer and members will also be invited to focus groups to share opinions on proposals that emerge.

"As we continue to explore ways of further enhancing the services that we provide to all members, we will be asking associates to tell us what they would like to see in the future," said Annette Wade-Clarke, Director of Marketing and Membership.

"We would particularly like to hear from associate and professional associate

members who have retired from a range of roles about the services that they would like us to offer."

More details will be shared later in the year via the ASCL Associates website www.ascl.org.uk/Associates



WELLINGTON BOOST

After a couple of ‘false starts’, Associates finally enjoyed a reunion day out in London at the home of the Iron Duke, says Ann Mullins

At the third time of asking – with two previous attempts falling foul of Covid restrictions – we were able to organise our visit to Apsley House followed by a convivial lunch.

But there was still time for an additional hiccup. Fifteen minutes before we were due to meet, the Rose and Crown pub – an historic hostelry which had reportedly been the living quarters for Cromwell’s bodyguards and was now our lunch destination – phoned to cancel because the chef was ill.

The gods were smiling, though, and I happened to be across the road from the King’s Arms. It was shut, but I spied someone inside, tapped the glass door and was told we could be accommodated in a room upstairs.

London is very busy with preparations for the Platinum Jubilee and the visit to top of the Wellington Arch gave us a panoramic view of the city. We saw six outriders escorting a fleet of cars towards Buckingham Palace but we had missed the cavalry rehearsing their ride through the Arch.

Risking our lives, we crossed Piccadilly to Apsley House, universally known as Number 1 London.

Our guide explained that originally there had been a terrace of brick built houses on the spot and No. 1 was the first one past the western toll gate.

The Duke of Wellington bought the house from his brother, enlarged it

significantly and complained loudly to his architect because costs had doubled.

We also learned why he is known as the ‘Iron Duke’; he became very unpopular when he was Prime Minister and had iron bars installed to protect the house.

We were all impressed by a huge sculpture of Napoleon by Canova in the stairwell. It was a gift to the Duke, but it was so heavy that he had to pay for a brick support to be installed in the wine cellar beneath to take its weight.

There is an astonishing collection of paintings on display. I was especially pleased to see so many Dutch paintings, with their details of everyday life – the Duke admired and collected them.

I loved The Eavesdropper by Nicolas Maes: the central figure is a girl listening at a door, but if you look carefully you can see a young couple embracing in a far corner. Two amazing paintings by Velazquez are The Waterseller of Seville and Pope Innocent X, while Titian’s Portrait of a Lady is thought to be of his mistress.

As you would expect, there are several portraits of Wellington and Napoleon. The equestrian portrait is by Goya but it seems that the Duke did not care for it because it made him look ‘too Spanish’. Art historians suspect that it was originally a painting of someone else and was altered!

The Battle of Waterloo is depicted in a very large painting of the battlefield,

though, interestingly, Wellington chose the view from Napoleon’s position rather than his own. He subsequently commissioned Sir David Wilkie to paint the Chelsea Pensioners reading the dispatch announcing the victory.

The silver and porcelain (Meissen and Sevres) given to Wellington by European kings is also well worth seeing, especially the silverware for the dining table which was a gift from Portugal. I’m just glad I don’t have to clean it.

The family of the 8th Duke still lives at Apsley House and you can see the children’s swings in the garden. It seems that after the war the house was in need of extensive repairs so the then Duke negotiated a deal – he would give it to the nation as long as he retained the right to live there.

He must have been a good negotiator as he kept two-thirds of the house. The original adjoining houses were demolished to create the dual carriageways in Piccadilly and Park Lane, so the house now stands in its own island.

A short walk on a glorious day took us to lunch and a chance to chat to old friends and new. Our impromptu booking turned out very well in the end.

There are plans to meet in Bristol next May – we hope to see you there!

YOU’VE GOT TO GET THE RELATIONSHIPS RIGHT

John Caperon talks to ASCL president-elect Evelyn Forde about her schooldays, the challenges posed by issues surrounding race and gender and why you shouldn’t ask her for a timetable

Approaching Evelyn Forde’s school in leafy North-West London, you’d expect a place of order and purpose; here’s a single-sex girls’ school in a well-heeled part of the capital, after all.

Copthall Academy’s values are spelt out on its impressive website: Respect, Aspiration, Equality for all, Support and safety, Responsibility. A promotional film gives you a clear impression of pristine classrooms and corridors, key mots justes about education and young and eager staff keen to promote learning and development in their own specialist areas.

Given this atmosphere of aspiration, you might expect Evelyn to be someone who’d come from a similar educational background. So, looking back, how would she rate her own educational experience as a youngster?

“Not good,” she says. “My time at school wasn’t great ... the teachers just didn’t seem to care and, as a result, I spent a lot of time when

I should have been in class riding the Number 8 bus up and down Oxford Street.

“Nobody noticed I was missing.”

Home life wasn’t much more than ‘a matter of survival’, she adds.

“There were five of us, life was hard. We were just trying to get through the day and education wasn’t rooted in us as a family.”

‘Nobody noticed I was missing’

When Evelyn was nine, her family emigrated to her father’s native Ghana, where she spent two years in a ‘strict’ secondary boarding school. On return to England, though, her remaining secondary years were unproductive and Evelyn left school at 16 with no qualifications.

Having had two children by the age of 24, she felt an impulse to ‘get her life sorted out’.

Along with child care and cleaning work, Evelyn embarked on night school, firstly studying health and social care, then an access course to acquire some GCSEs.





She followed that with a degree course in African History and Literature at London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and subsequently took the short walk to the Institute of Education, where she took her PGCE.

She started teaching history in a tough, inner-city school in Tottenham in 1999.

"I just loved what I was doing," she says; "I learned you've got to get the relationships right. Once you give them respect, tap into them, they become putty in your hands."

"It's about mutual respect and then the sky's the limit."

Evelyn's own experiences are at the heart of her school's values of respect and aspiration and respect is a key factor in the staffroom, even though she quickly found out she couldn't please all the people all the time.

"Make those decisions, tough as they are, and stick to them," she adds. "They must be based on what's best for the children and, for some of the people in the building that's a hard call,"

Key for Evelyn is the idea of leading through others, and that comes from awareness of her own limitations.

"Don't give me a timetable to do, because I haven't got a scooby-doo! I have good people around me who I trust, and they trust me, and we work well together."

"I'm a people person - children, parents, culture, ethos, all that I can do well; just don't give me a spreadsheet or a timetable."

On the question of single-sex education, Evelyn argues for its continuing importance. Girls' education contributes to female empowerment, she says.



"In this setting, they feel confident to be themselves. In a mixed school, sometimes girls' voices can get suppressed. As a leader, you find your place and I just feel as if this is where

'I've had the opportunity to excel'

I've really had the opportunity to excel.

"That, however, does not mean I don't miss the edginess of boys sometimes."

Evelyn says that education professionals need more support in getting the

uncertain and disputed area of girls' schools and transgender issues right.

"We need to lean into it, so that we can understand it better. It's about us navigating our way through it. We admit on sex; we are a single-sex girls' school and that solves the potential issue of whether to accept a boy identifying as a girl for us."

Evelyn's move into school leadership was prompted by a participant in the 'Future Leaders' scheme undertaking a year as an associate deputy in the school where she worked.

Her own confidence was boosted by the outstanding results achieved by a year cohort she had taught and mentored, so she applied to join the scheme herself.

After her initial associate deputy year, however, Evelyn found herself stuck; she went for 18 interviews in London

but didn't secure a post as either a head or deputy.

"I've thought about why that should have been; there was maybe something to do with gender and something to do with race," she says.

Evelyn is clear that it's the case for more diversity in educational leadership that has to be driven forward, something of a priority for a representative of a minority group herself.

"Working at senior level in ASCL has certainly made me

more knowledgeable. I know about things before they appear in the public realm and I then think what they might look like for my school."

"Member support is second to none and the annual conference provides superb networking opportunities."

The internal structure of ASCL gives voice to a range of opinion, she says, and policy is shaped by discussion.

"It's not one person's agenda; ASCL has that listening ear; our strapline 'acting on behalf of members' is what really happens."

Evelyn hasn't yet had one-to-ones with ministers, but relishes the prospect.

"Because you're not on your own, you're speaking on behalf of members and that's how you change policy. We've built relationships with people in power and I think they respect us; I'm just going to be the voice of ASCL, and I think that's pretty cool, actually."

"So far," says Evelyn, "I'm enjoying the gig."



She wants to have an impact on how students and schools are measured and judged.

"I think there are other ways we can measure outcomes for students and judge a school than just putting kids in an exam hall. It's not essentially about whether you're good or outstanding, it should be about the extent to which you're providing for your students, your community and your staff."

"We need to do more on equality and diversity, not least in our own organisation."





'WHAT TO ASSERT AND SURRENDER...'

Turning to the history books to prepare for his new ASCL Council role, Richard Atterton discovered its predecessor bodies were caring, campaigning and collaborative organisations that weren't afraid to speak their minds

I was elected to the ASCL Council in 2018. I like to be prepared so I made sure I read all the preparatory documents well in advance of my first council meeting.

I was also keen to know more about ASCL itself, its people and its history. I was hoping to find some grand tome or encyclopaedic volume to help me understand this organisation; after all, headteachers and school leaders have been around for a long time and played an important role in the nation's history.

I started digging around newspaper archives online. The many entries I found for ASCL's predecessor, the Secondary Heads Association (SHA), uncovered an organisation that took uncompromising positions on school autonomy, cared deeply about those it represented and worked constructively with government but was never afraid to argue its case.

General Secretary John Sutton in 1996 told its annual conference in Newcastle: "The attack on comprehensive schools is a lie of which the late Dr Goebbels would have been proud."

I also discovered references to the Association of Headmistresses (AHM) and the Headmasters' Association (HMA) in the newspaper archives, stretching back to their founding and documenting the organisation's presidential addresses and conference programme.

'Miss Buss was a force of nature'

After more searching online, I found a reference to Warwick's Modern Records Centre, a 'repository for national archives of trade unions and employers' organisations,'

I visited and began digitising thousands of documents and books. I have now amassed around 2,000 scans from Warwick and around 300 newspaper articles.

This, alongside *Reluctant Revolutionaries*, published in 1974 to celebrate 100 years of the AHM, provided a much fuller picture of the personal and policy challenges of girls' education and women's leadership.

"When women are educated, their countries become stronger and more prosperous." Michelle Obama



Association of Headmistresses

On a cold winter's morning, three days before Christmas 1874, nine headmistresses met in Myra Lodge Camden for the first annual meeting of the Association of Headmistresses.

The driving force behind this association was Frances Buss who, by the age of 23, had founded the North London Collegiate School for Ladies. By 1870 she would go on to found Camden School for Girls.

Buss was a force of nature, championing girls' education, campaigning for equality in public examinations and university admissions and tirelessly supporting suffragist causes.

In one of her journal-letters, Miss Buss describes the association's inception.

'Opinions were divided on compulsory Greek'

"Miss Beale of Cheltenham called on me the day I was in London . . . she and I think we must form an Association of Head-mistresses and hold conferences occasionally, in order to know what we ought to assert and what surrender."

Zoe Milsom in her PhD thesis *Interwar Headmistresses: Gender, Identity, Space-Place* suggests that such an association provided a powerful network and place for headmistresses where they

could come together to form a collective identity and assert their power.

In the first 20 years of the association, teacher training, pensions and examinations were priorities. While there was a great deal of unity on many issues, the association had divergent thoughts on issues such as technical education and curriculum design.

The Headmasters' Association (HMA)

'Headmasters have powers at their disposal with which Prime Ministers have never yet been invested' Winston Churchill

'SHA was never afraid to argue its case'

The HMA began out of need. Need that reflected growth of boys' education without the necessary infrastructure or support that was available to members of the Headmasters Conference.

They first met January 17 1891 in The Holborn Restaurant, having amassed more than 100 members (most of whom were not eligible to join HMC), with the purpose of discussing educational subjects such as teaching methods, homework and examinations.

The meeting was presided over by Rev Dr R B Poole, head of Bedford Modern. One topic of debate recorded in the press was compulsory Greek on university entrance exams. Opinions were strongly divided and the matter was adjourned until the next meeting.

William Fowler wrote the following week to the *Evening Standard* stating "There can be no doubt but that the Association, if it goes on as it has begun, will have a great influence

on the secondary education of the country, more especially upon those questions of commercial and technical education which are now being brought so prominently to the front."

These extraordinary organisations would face the challenges of teaching through two world wars, evacuation, multiple reorganisations and the national restructuring of education.

They would have to contend with frequent curriculum changes, changes in social mores, and unending battles

with government over funding. The AHM and the HMA were close not just ideologically but physically; they had shared office space from 1921 onwards.

After a change in trade union law banning single sex unions, both the Headmistresses and the Headmasters voted overwhelmingly to amalgamate. Thus in 1977, SHA was born, and Molly Blake became its first president.

Writing in the *Independent*, Harry Judge in a tribute to John Dorell, General Secretary, said his most 'durable achievement was helping to persuade the headmasters and headmistresses to get into bed together, and to found the influential Secondary Heads' Association.'

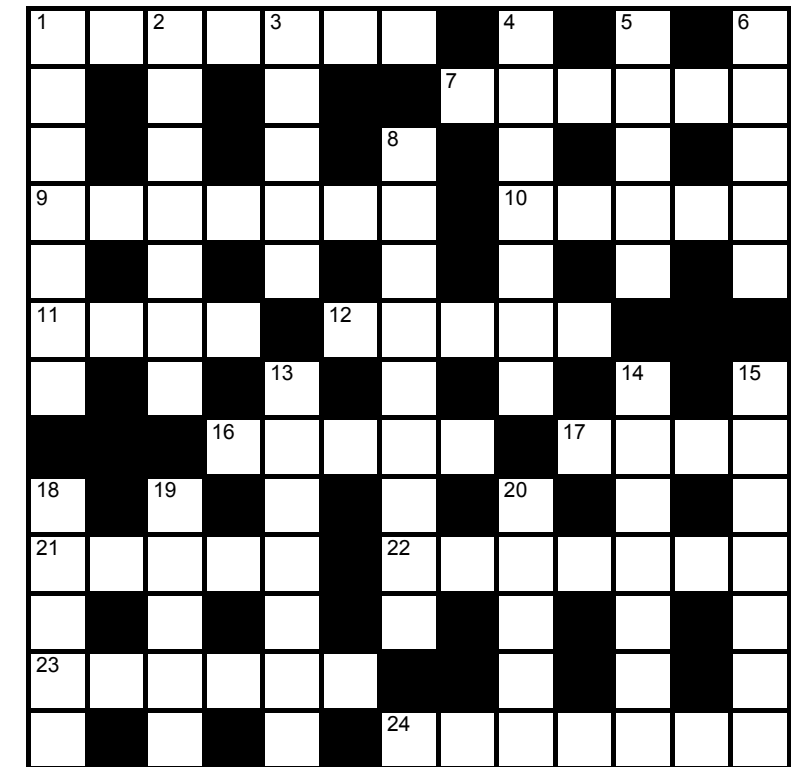
Richard Atterton will be writing more on his research into the history of ASCL and its predecessors in future issues of *Associates News*.

Across

- 1 Aircraft with two sets of wings, one above the other (7)
- 7 Fluid in the mouth (6)
- 9 Become rigid (7)
- 10 Name of a book (5)
- 11 Terminal part of the human arm (4)
- 12 Tailed heavenly body (5)
- 16 Tall tower referred to in the Bible (5)
- 17 Celebrity (4)
- 21 Lawn plant (5)
- 22 Two-wheeled, horse-drawn vehicle (7)
- 23 In a level and regular way (6)
- 24 At no particular moment (7)

Down

- 1 Beetroot soup (7)
- 2 Person who requires medical care (7)
- 3 At great height (5)
- 4 Black leopard (7)
- 5 Number indicated by the Roman LX (5)
- 6 Ring-shaped bread roll (5)
- 8 Freedom from guilt (9)
- 13 Gelatinous container with medicine inside (7)
- 14 Filled pasta cases (7)
- 15 Magazine article (7)
- 18 Acquiesce (5)
- 19 Part of a collar (5)
- 20 Extremely ornate (5)



WORD SEARCH

V M M C H S K S Y T E E F
 S S H O E S N N W A D Z S
 R Q G Y K Y A A X Q U T G
 A S E B A N H E K D O W G
 E C R D O O Q J O O E I O
 H C A E C O T I B G L N F
 S U Y S V S K C O S U S A
 R F F M T O F E P G Q R Q
 E F C S B A L O N I B M C
 P L I U E A N L G D W A Q
 I I D V J T L E S W S R D
 L N M I C J A S T G W A W
 A K N O C F R K U S D C R
 C S T X T E N E S J A A S
 E K Y J T O N G S Q L S P

- ◇ BOOKENDS
- ◇ BOOTS
- ◇ CALIPERS
- ◇ CASTANETS
- ◇ CUFFLINKS
- ◇ CYMBALS
- ◇ DICE
- ◇ EYES
- ◇ FEET
- ◇ JEANS
- ◇ LOVERS
- ◇ MARACAS
- ◇ SHEARS
- ◇ SHOES
- ◇ SKATES
- ◇ SOCKS
- ◇ TONGS
- ◇ TWINS



BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM

Enlisting as a volunteer at his local museum, Peter Senior found many of his old headteaching skills came in handy



... been doing professionally for over 40 years, I offered woodwork.

My first project was a cabinet to display the artefacts of a volunteer who had also served at the base followed by new library shelving and a refit to display in the shop.

During the open season, I found welcoming visitors, answering their questions, and telling them about the displays was very rewarding. After my first year I was drafted on to the

committee; people soon realised that I could offer other skills, too.

"Could you review our safety risk assessment? What is this GDPR thing? It sounds important. Can you sort it for us? How might we reorganise exhibits to tell a story, with displays grouped into themes? Our policies and procedures need a major update" ... and so on.

Parham is a small, charitable museum with about 5,000 visitors a year. It opened in the restored Tower in 1981 as a memorial to the men of the USAAF 390th Bombardment Group (Heavy), 1942-1945.

Three thousand men were based there and 743 of the B17 'Flying Fortress' aircrews were killed. During the 1990s, veterans of the British Resistance Organisation were released from their secrecy obligations and in 1997 we opened the only museum dedicated to this relatively unknown part of Britain's 1940 defence plans.

I have now been chair of the committee of trustees for two years. Yes, it means leading, preparing reports,

securing grants, giving presentations, recruiting volunteer staff and so on, rather like school.

But it also enables me to work at the front: there are no paid staff to clean toilets, sort out the ICT, carry out essential maintenance and improve our exhibitions.

Encouraging child visitors is a major part of our mission and I still feel uplifted when a class of enthusiastic 11-year-olds comes piling out of the bus. They will use activity booklets prepared by my wife, who has also appointed herself volunteer land girl. The most special moments are when relatives of veterans visit us from the USA. ➤



When my wife and I gave up full time work, we easily found lots of fun things to do. Sailing and cattle ranching in Montana were long-established interests.

What could I do from home that was worthwhile and enjoyable, too? For three years, I was principal at our sailing club, responsible for safety and teaching standards but annual Royal Yachting Association inspections felt a bit too much like work.

Then I got involved with Eighth in the East, a Lottery-funded project to record the archaeology of the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) in Suffolk. Being trained to undertake

'What is this GDPR thing?'

this professionally was great and my final task was to collate and post all our records of Station 153 Framlingham, now Parham Airfield Museum.

This was where we used to take the children when it first opened in the 1980s so I decided to volunteer. It dovetailed with my phased withdrawal from education consultancy.

"What skills can you offer?" they asked on my first visit. Thinking quickly to find something unlike what I had



Images supplied by Parham Airfield Museum.



Just before Covid-19 hit, we demolished a Nissen Hut and have replaced it with a new exhibition hall. Professional contractors put up the structure and installed heating and electrics. We have done the internal fitting out and set up all the displays ourselves.

I designed and researched the lighting plan and new wall boards. As an active member of what has become our 'Old n' Colds' working group, I discuss projects with the maintenance lead and submit my efforts to rigorous quality assurance. An ex-headteacher is given little opportunity to cultivate an inflated idea of his own importance!

'There is comradeship and a sense of achievement'

Volunteering in this way has been great. It offers social interaction, teamwork, and a range of tasks which both utilise existing skills and develop new ones. The comradeship and sense of achievement certainly helped us all through lockdown. What price a

role with no income tax to pay that is largely fun and concentrates on what used to be only a hobby?

There is no doubt that keeping active and feeling useful is a major ingredient of successful "retirement". My advice is to find something which benefits the community that matches your interests and skills, then get on and do it.

If you are in Suffolk, please visit our museum. Admission is free!

Peter Senior was headteacher of Chantry High, Ipswich, 1986-1995 and head of Steyning Grammar School, 1995-2006. He went on to set up his own education consultancy and retired from education in 2017.

Share your experiences with Associates News

Associates News is looking for more contributors to provide stories, reviews and opinions for its pages.

Whether you have started a new job, taken on a volunteer role, are involved in a hobby you are passionate about or if you have an experience from your school career or home life you'd like to share, we want to hear from you.

You might be active in an organisation or advisory body, fundraising for a good cause or making a splash in a new career field – let us know what life is like.

Following the success of our lockdown book and film lists, we're also looking for more readers' choices of what to read and watch now life is returning to normal.

And now travel is back on the agenda, let us know your holiday tales and top destination tips, whether it's the best region for wine-tasting, a unique sightseeing experience or the most (or least!) luxurious hotel you've ever stayed in.

Associates News is published three times a year. The next issue will be Autumn 2022 and the deadline is the first week of September.

If you'd like to contribute, send your article with pictures if possible, to associatesnews@ascl.org.uk

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A MOVING EXPERIENCE

ASCL has a brand new headquarters in Leicester. A misty-eyed Tony Richardson bids farewell to the old offices and looks to a bright future in the new premises

Most of us associate ASCL with its premises at 130 Regent Road, Leicester, where it has been housed for the last 30 years or so in a Victorian/Edwardian house with a kind of genteel charm.

We have become accustomed to venturing up New Walk with its faded Regency air or parking on the edge of Victoria Park.

It's time for a change, however, and the Association has moved to new offices on the second floor of Peat House, a modern office block directly opposite the railway station in Waterloo Way in the city.

The new premises were formally declared open at a brief ceremony with guests including the present presidential trio, seven past presidents, a former general secretary, former assistant general secretary, the past general secretary of HMC and two knights of the realm.

Sir John Dunford, former President and General Secretary, reminded us of significant milestones in ASCL's development,

- the formation of the Secondary Heads Association (SHA) in 1977, bringing together the Association of Headmistresses (AHM) and the Headmasters' Association (HMA)
- the inclusion of deputy heads as full members in 1983

- the recognition of shared leadership responsibility in the inclusion of assistant heads in 1999 and of other senior support staff in 2005
- the consequent change of name to ASCL in 2006

As a result of these developments, ASCL is the only association to speak exclusively for the leadership of Britain's schools and colleges and its steadily expanding membership now stands at 21,500.

Dr William Richardson, past general secretary of HMC, described the work undertaken to clear the accumulated detritus that had gathered over years in the cellars of 130 Regent Road, separating rubbish – the majority! – from valuable records of more than 100 years of educational history.

These are now being kept at the University of Warwick.

Change is often difficult and, perhaps, particularly so as one gets older and I did find it difficult to warm to the new premises which are very modern and corporate, rather than academic, in feel.

It is, however, clear that the premises are much better suited to the efficient running of a large association in the 2020s.

The new accommodation:

- represents a downsizing from 8,500 sq ft to 5,200 sq ft

National Headquarters
Officially opened on 31 March 2022

- is much more efficient and flexible in its use - no staircases, corridors, small rooms as at Regent Road
- reflects changing patterns of working post-Covid
- is state of the art in its IT and AV provision
- can house meetings and PD events of up to 28, thus saving on hiring other venues
- is easily accessible – directly opposite London Road Station and close to a multi-storey car park
- is cost effective – low maintenance, predictable rent and service charges, rather than the inevitable and unpredictable costs of maintaining an ageing building

ASCL has prospered and flourished by continually facing and embracing change while continuing to respect its history.

This is reflected not only in the move to Peat House but also in the splendid mural in its main meeting space which records significant points in our history, starting with no lesser persons than the formidable Miss Buss and Miss Beale, the founders of AHM in 1874.

See p12 for more on the ASCL archives.

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