

Inside Latin Life



Archive Day 2025



New book on George Embleton



Old Latins back in school



Prize-giving with Sam Tatlow (Class of 2005)



Class of 1975 reunion



Welcome to the 23rd edition of Latin Life

It is always a pleasure to share in the stories that connect past and present here at Royal Latin, and this edition of Latin Life is no exception. From archive days and anniversary reunions to prize-givings and chess matches, the bonds between generations of Latins continue to flourish, reminding us of what it truly means to be part of this remarkable community.

Having now completed my first full year as Headteacher, I continue to be struck by the strength of connection so many Old Latins still feel towards the school. Whether they left last year or fifty years ago, each one adds something unique to our shared story. Archive Day in May was a highlight – not only a celebration of our school's long and fascinating history, but also a wonderful opportunity to meet alumni, share memories and look to the future. My thanks go to Martin Boileau, our guest speaker, whose reflections on drama at RLS were as moving as they were entertaining.

It has also been inspiring to see so many recent leavers returning to give back – offering careers advice, mentoring students in our MedSoc group, or simply taking time to reconnect. There's a lovely symmetry in former students now guiding the next generation. And the energy and generosity they bring is a powerful testament to the values they took with them

from their time here.

Reading through the pages of this edition, I've been particularly moved by the tributes and achievements featured; from the astonishing global success of a Roblox game developed by an Old Latin, to the enduring friendships marked by a 50-year reunion. These stories serve as a powerful reminder: our community is not defined by dates or buildings, but by people – people who care deeply, who challenge themselves, and who carry the spirit of the Latin into the wider world.

To all Old Latins, thank you for the many ways you continue to enrich our school – with your stories, your support, and your presence. As ever, whether you are reading this nearby or far afield, please know that you are always welcome at Chandos Road.

With warmest wishes for a restful and happy summer,

Ian Chislett, Headteacher

Archive Day, 7th May 2025



On Wednesday, 7th May around fifty Old Latins, as well as sixth-form students and staff, attended Archive Day in Rotherfield House.

Guests were able to meet up with old friends, enjoy tea and cake as well as take the opportunity to view a selection of archive material, featuring a special 'Drama through the years' display in honour of the guest speaker at the event, Martin Boileau (Head of Drama 1994–2018), including a variety of costumes from Royal Latin past productions.

With the 80th anniversary of VE Day falling on the day before Archive Day, we also had a display dedicated to the war years at the Royal Latin.

Headteacher, Ian Chislett welcomed Old Latins and enjoyed getting to know them at his first alumni event and his first Archive Day, and Martin Boileau entertained the audience with his speech which included tales of his over two decades in the drama department. School tours were also on offer during the afternoon.

For anyone who missed Archive Day, don't forget you can also browse our digital archive by clicking on the 'SDS' tab on the RLS Connect homepage. Also, we hope to offer another Archive 'Pop-in, meet up and browse' event at the end of the year.

If you missed Archive Day this year, there is still an opportunity to attend our upcoming

'Archive Pop-in, Meet up & Browse' on

Wednesday, 3rd December

10am–12pm

To book a place, please visit the events booking pages on RLS Connect:

rlsconnect.royallatin.org/events

Or email latinlife@royallatin.org

Or ring Lucy Beckett on 01280 827306

Please note attendance is by pre-booking only.



Old Latins from across the decades came together



Old Latins mingle in Rotherfield



A display to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day



The audience awaits Mr Chislett's welcome and our guest speaker, Martin Boileau



Martin Boileau pictured alongside some of the costumes from his past productions



An array of costumes kindly brought along by Martin Boileau and Victoria Whalley

VE-Day 80: memories of 8th May 1945

Anthony Barr (Class of 1947)



Anthony at school



Thank you to Anthony Barr for writing to us in May with his his recollections of VE -Day, below. It is always fascinating to hear about school life decades ago, particularly during the war years.

The celebration of VE-Day in May has brought back memories of the old school at this time, some eighty years ago. I wrote a brief note about D-Day some years ago and I realised how unperturbed the school was by wartime events, and it is true again at the end of the European war in 1945.

My father was still in the RAF so we were a truncated family and gradually the news had come how the Nazi power in Europe was coming to an end. Churchill's decision to establish a VE-Day was a slight anti-climax to the events in Germany, despite the fact that the final official surrender of the enemy was planned for VE-Day too. The reason I use the word 'anti-climax' is simply that some things had changed in our lives that already signaled the beginning of peace. I suppose the most significant of these was the ending of the blackout. Since 1939 we had restrictions on 'showing a light' from our homes and even our bicycle lamps had been shaded to prevent enemy aircraft movement. By 8th May we were free from this wretched restriction. (Parts of the school had blackout curtains, but the use of the buildings for evening events was quite limited. In midwinter it was particularly difficult when the lighting was required in the late afternoons for the normal timetable. Our food rationing, however, continued for years after VE-Day.

We had the day off from school for 8th May 1945 without a major celebration, but I believe that in these few days of early May the school arranged a party, based on the Christmas events that we regularly held for senior students. The girls danced in the Assembly Hall, I recall, and the music came from the loudspeakers suspended in the middle of the room. I was in Form 3 at this point in my school life and we felt slightly side-lined by the events on the dance-floor. The staff seem, in my recall, to have mysteriously

disappeared from view, which was an unusual event.

At home on 8th May we depended on local arrangements for a Village Hall tea party and as the evening rolled on we had a huge bonfire in Gawcott Chapel Close and I believe that Edwin Jeffs, whose obituary you recently published, exploded an army firework, a Thunder Flash, which was the only means of having a fireworks display.

I remember so well at the end of VE-Day seeing the setting of the sun and wondering what would be occurring in the near future and what freedom from warfare would reveal. The Asian war had to be concluded, although the defeat of Germany had been our greatest concern, but no one knew of the atomic bomb and its world-changing effect. Our first real contact with the end of hostilities was the return of the British prisoners of war. This happened quite rapidly and in the village we saw old faces return. We went back to the old school at RLS in Chandos Road and the routine was unchanged.

They were funny old days at our school of about 180 scholars and quite unrecognisable to the present day students at RLS.



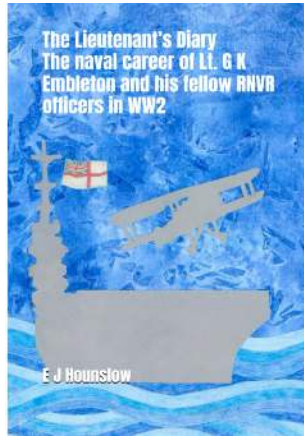
An extract from the 1947 school photo, with Anthony second to back row, second from left



A classroom and the hall in the 1930s

Old Latins in print

John Hounslow (Class of 1970)



John Hounslow is the author of *Latin Lives: 600 Years of the Royal Latin School*, and has now published this new book, also linked to the Royal Latin, as he explains below.

Those students and staff who were at the Royal Latin School between 1948 and 1979 will know George Embleton, the headteacher who completed an amazing 31 years in post. They will also probably be familiar with the fact that he was in the Royal Navy during WWII.

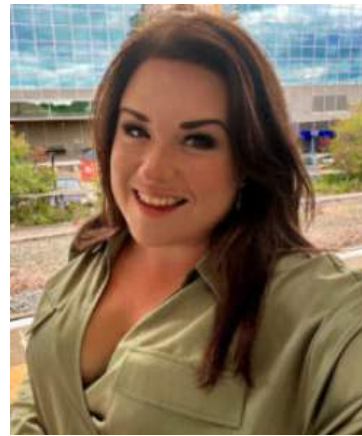
Thanks to the kindness of his two daughters, Rosemary and Jane, I have had access to a diary he kept during his war service as well as his personnel record obtained from the Royal Naval Archives. This enabled me to write *The Lieutenant's Diary* which tells the amazing story of his career in the Navy, firstly in the aircraft carrier HMS *Victorious*, where he served on the infamous arctic convoys to Operations Pedestal and Torch in the Mediterranean. Later, whilst serving in the battleship HMS *King George V*, he had the honour of bringing Winston Churchill back to the UK from Gibraltar.

He subsequently served in the Admiral's flagship, HMS *Scylla*, during the D-Day landings and when the ship limped back to Chatham after striking a mine he was transferred to HMS *Indefatigable* for the attacks on the Tirpitz before sailing out to join the US Fleet in the Pacific. There he was involved in fighting against Kamikaze attacks during the landings on Iwo Jima.

Embleton's war ended with the British ship anchored in Tokyo Bay as the Imperial Japanese Forces came onboard the USS *Missouri* to sign the surrender document which brought the war to a close.

The Lieutenant's Diary is now available in both hardback and paperback from Amazon.

Emma Graham (née Tallon, Class of 2005)

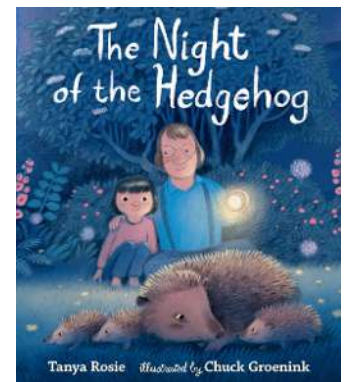


Congratulations to Emma Graham (nee Tallon) on the publication of her first novel in her new 'Capello Family Series', *A Family Betrayal*, set in the grimy London gangster underworld.

Emma is a full-time author and has written 17 books since 2017 – all organised-crime thrillers. She also has many other ideas in the pipeline for further books.

Emma's books, including her latest novel, *A Family Betrayal*, are published by Bookouture and are available from Amazon.

Tanya Rosie (Class of 2008)



After leaving RLS Tanya studied English Literature in Nottingham, Vancouver and London, before becoming an editor, author and passionate reader of children's books. She currently works as a commissioning editor at Walker Books, and also loves to write poems and picture books of her own.

The Night of the Hedgehog, illustrated by Chuck Groenink and published by Walker books in June and is available from Waterstones. Tanya's three previous books are: *Mum, Me and the Mulberry Tree*, *Grandpa Is Here* and *The Doll's House*.

Are you an Old Latin author? Get in touch at latinlife@royallatin.org to get your book listed in our next issue. Or would you be willing to do an author visit for current students in school? Get in touch at latinlife@royallatin.org

Old Latins back in school
Class of 2024 students back to support current students already!



Thank you to Charlotte Sambrook Smith from the Class of 2024 for taking time out of her studies in Veterinary Science to return to school this spring to offer application advice to current aspiring vets in our sixth-form MedSoc.

If you work in medical science or healthcare, and would like to support our MedSoc students, please contact latinlife@royallatin.org



It was lovely to see former 2023/24 senior student leadership team members Amelia, Kyle and Aliyah back again already to support current students at Sports Day this summer. We hope to see you again soon.

Old Latins are always welcome back in school (by appointment!), no matter how recently you left.

Tom Maddox (Class of 2015)



Tom makes his way around the classroom competing with multiple players simultaneously

Our after-school chess club was fortunate enough to receive a special guest player on 24th June – Tom Maddox, from the Class of 2015.

Tom was a talented chess player at RLS himself, and continued his interest at university and beyond.

Tom now works in finance, but kindly spared the time to take on a simultaneous chess challenge with our young chess players back at school.

The chess club is run by Baird McClellan, as it was in Tom's days at school, and Baird and Tom enjoyed the opportunity to catch up.



Teacher and student reunited

Sam Tatlow (Class of 2005) at Prize-giving 2025



Sam Tatlow MBE

We were delighted to welcome Sam Tatlow, from the Class of 2005, to be our guest of honour at the annual Prize-giving evening this year, on 27th June.

Sam is Head of Diversity Equity and Inclusion at ITV and is part of the team delivering their Diversity Acceleration Plan. She is involved in delivering ITV's Disability agenda and also works closely with producers and the commissioning teams to ensure a diverse and inclusive team are involved for ITV commissions working particularly closely with the teams in factual entertainment, sport, daytime and the soaps.

Prior to joining ITV, Sam worked for training and consultancy company thinkBIGGER! where she worked on projects such as the Channel 4 Production Training Scheme and on the training programme for the disabled presenters and reporters for the coverage of the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

Sam Chairs BAFTA's Disability Advisory Group, is a member of their Learning, Inclusion and Talent Committee and is part of BAFTA's Diversity Steering Group for the Awards. She is part of the British Film Institute's Disability Advisory Group, is Chair of the Board of Trustees for Graeae Theatre Company, the UK's leading disabled-led theatre company and in 2021 was listed in the Shaw Trust's Power 100, the list of the top 100 most influential Disabled people in the UK. She was awarded an MBE for her services to Disabled People in the Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours list in June 2022.

At Prize-giving Sam delivered an inspiring speech about her life and career since leaving school, including the following extract:



The Prize-giving cups awaiting presentation

'When thinking about this evening and what I wanted to say, I tried to imagine what you as the students would like to hear, and perhaps what I would have liked to hear about when I was sitting in your seats all those years ago.'

Thinking back over my career I'd love to be able to tell you that there was a master plan, that I had it all mapped out and that it went perfectly step by step. But that wouldn't be true. But what I can say is that there is a real power in saying YES. Taking opportunities, trying something new, something different or something you hadn't expected. Saying yes even when you're not quite sure whether you know if it's the right thing and giving it a go anyway. I think that's what has been the power behind getting to where I am now.'

I left the Royal Latin not really knowing what I wanted or what my life would look like. I knew I enjoyed drama and I was good at it. Back then our drama teacher Mr Boileau saw something in me and encouraged me throughout my time at the school so I knew drama was something I could do. So after A levels I headed to Bretton Hall, Leeds University to study Theatre and Performance. I knew I didn't want to be an actor so drama school wasn't for me, but this place, set in the middle of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park felt like home the moment I arrived for my audition. I said yes when they offered me a place; I said yes to the course, to living in the middle of a field, to leaving home and traveling up north and giving myself the opportunity to give it a go.'

Thank you, Sam, for continuing to support your old school, and our students, twenty years after leaving. We look forward to welcoming you back again in the not too distant future.

In other Old Latin news

Neha Mistry (née Makwana, Class of 2004)



Congratulations to Neha Mistry (née Makwana) from the Class of 2004 for her successful recent collaboration with the BBC's Tiny Happy People programme, including videos available on the BBC's online platform to provide practical communication tips for families.

Neha is a clinical lead in autism and a highly specialist paediatric speech and language therapist with over 15 years of experience in the NHS and over a decade in independent practice.

Away from clinical practice, Neha's other projects have included contributing to the book *A Parent's Guide to Autism Diagnosis: What to Expect and How to Support Your Child*, and delivering autism awareness training for parents/carers and educational staff in India.



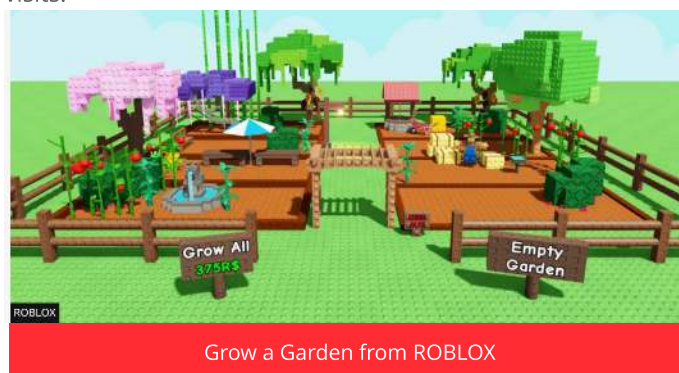
George Smith (Class of 2020)



Another Old Latin achieving great things, this time in the gaming sector, is George Smith. After leaving school in 2020 George went on to study Computer Games Technology at Portsmouth University, but even before he left school George was a games developer.

He is currently Creative Director for Splitting Point Studios, developers of the Roblox sensation, *Grow a Garden*, a game which recently broke the record for the number of concurrent players – 21.3 million! This beat the previous record held by Epic Games' *Fortnite*.

Grow a Garden allows players to cultivate virtual land and earn in-game currency, and has also reached over 8.5 billion visits.



Grow a Garden from ROBLOX

News of the success of both of the above Old Latins was passed on by current or former Royal Latin teachers, so whatever you go on to do, be sure to know that even after you have left school, your teachers are following your careers with interest!

From Stewart Walker (Class of 1975)

Class of 1975 50th-anniversary reunion, 14th June 2025



Back row (left to right) Ian Brady, Ian Huggett, Andy Cooper, Gary Emmett, Martin Pemberton, Stan Petrovic, Ian James, Richard Mann, Ken Grimsdell, Corine Stansfield, John Hilsdon (hidden), Nicky Coombes

Seated (left to right) Debbie Walker (my wife and co-host), Esther Marchant, Sally Harris, Katie Grimsdell, Angela Rhodes, Diane Morris

Front row (left to right) Ian Bamford, Janet Lewis, Liz Smith, Me (Stewart Walker), Jessica Wiles, Bridget Long

Thank you to Stewart Walker from the Class of 1975 for sending in this marvelous photo, and caption, together with details of the latest '75 Club' reunion at his home on Saturday 14th June, below.

'We had 23 of the Class of '75 at our reunion on Saturday plus Andy Cooper. We all think that's a pretty good turnout after 50 years. Two came from the USA and one from Australia.

We met at our house and then, in the evening, went to The Ivy House in Chalfont St Giles for dinner. On Sunday morning some of us went for a walk around The Chiltern Open Air Museum.'

By all accounts everyone who attended had a very enjoyable time, as illustrated by this small selection of the

very positive feedback Stewart received after his efforts:

'I woke up this morning with a lightness of spirit and emotional warmth that is quite wonderful. All as a result of the good fortune to being part of such a fabulous group '

It was such a fantastic day yesterday. It was so lovely to catch up with everyone, share what we've all been up to and to remember wonderful, fun school memories. Those were the days! It truly was a special day and evening and I'm looking forward to our next get together.'

Andy Cooper, who is well placed to comment, reflected, *'If there is an RLS year group with greater camaraderie, genuine friendships and concern for each other . . . then I have missed it!!'*

Calling the Class of 2005

A 20th anniversary reunion is planned on the afternoon of Saturday 13th September at school for a meet-up and tour, followed by a social gathering in Buckingham.

Thank you to all those who have already expressed an interest .

Please email latinlife@royallatin.org as soon as possible if you would like to attend, so that we can keep you informed of the final details and arrangements.

Aspirations Day, 19th November 2025 - can you help?



Images from last year's Aspirations Day

The date is now set for our annual careers fair – 'Aspirations Day'. This event takes place during school hours, with year groups (Year 7 to 13) taking it turns to visit the event during the day.

Last year, we had a number of Old Latins take part, and we'd love alumni to be involved again with providing careers advice to students. Thank you to all of those who have already been in touch to offer your support.

Whether you would be able to represent your employer or just share your personal experience and give general advice about your profession or sector, do get in touch with us – by emailing latinlife@royallatin.org.



Nearly 350 new online members during 2024/25 on RLS Connect!



RLS CONNECT



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Your last login was
04 Jul 2024

Share a story with the community

1384
Online Members

438
Photos

482
Mentors

We've been pleased to see the number of online members on RLS Connect steadily increase this academic year, with new members from across the decades, including the majority of the Class of 2024 already signed up! If you haven't yet joined, it's quick and easy to register, and once you have you can:

Build your profile (adding a photo, interests, career path)

Invite others to join too

Find, message & connect with your old school friends, teachers, siblings, & staff

Read about upcoming events for Old Latins and book places at Reunion Days and special 600th Anniversary celebrations

Browse our growing digital archive and search for

yourself or your friends in our digitised material

Join a Group and reconnect or meet other Latins that have similar interests to you, careers, or classmates from the same decade

Share information about your career, a new venture, a job opportunity you have got or anything exciting you think would be of interest to other Latins

Help give back to your old school with careers advice & mentoring for current students

Opt to receive regular bulletins from the Development team, with news relevant to alumni

Join today!
rlsconnect.royallatin.org



Royal Latin School Shop

Visit royallatin.org/shop to view our full of range of merchandise, including our 600th anniversary items

(orders will posted in September)



Get in Touch!

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Founded 1423

2025/26 Calendar

(any updates, will be
published on RLS Connect)

Friday, 7th November

RLS Act of Remembrance

Wednesday, 3rd December

Archive Pop-in & Browse & Old
Latin Meet up

Tuesday, 16th December

RLS Carol Concert at Buckingham
Parish Church

Wednesday, 6th May

Annual Archive Open Day

Friday, 18th June

Founders' Day & Sports Day

Our Lillingstone Lecture Series
dates will be published on RLS
Connect when confirmed.



Sports Day Cup 2025 winners:
Newton

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It's your Latin Life ...



As always, we rely on your
contributions to shape this
magazine - so please get in touch
to share ideas for articles or let us
know what you would like to see
included in *Latin Life*.

We'd particularly like to be able to
share your own news – whether
relating to career, family, leisure,
travel or voluntary work – with
other Old Latins, so get your
thinking caps on and email us at:

latinlife@royallatin.org

