



## **Old Grovian Association AGM 2021 – Comments from the Chair**

I was honoured to be asked to take on the role of Chair of the Old Grovian Association – but I am aware that I have very big shoes to fill. I would like to thank our outgoing Chair, Keith Jones, not only for his work for the Association but also for being a true inspiration to all of us who have had the privilege of knowing him over the years. In fact, when I mentioned to my brother, also an Old Grovian, that I was taking over from Keith his words to me were ‘Good luck, that’s like taking over Man Utd from Sir Alex Ferguson!’

The Grove has been a part of my life since I was 12 years old. I continue to have a very close network of friends that I made at the school and I am very much looking forward to organising Old Grovian events for the coming year, including working with the school to arrange Decade Reunions. I would like to encourage all those wavering about attending such reunions to come along – not only are these gatherings a lot of fun, it is actually quite humbling to realise what a wonderful community we have – and what a great privilege it is to be part of something so special. Speaking to colleagues it’s amazing how many people don’t have such fond memories of their time at school and it’s important for those of us that did to remember and cherish it.

The events of the last couple of years have really highlighted to me the importance of staying in touch with old friends – even when this had to be done via the dreaded Zoom. Whilst online teaching and learning are far from ideal, the use of technology over the last year has enabled us Old Grovians to experience current school life in a way that was previously not possible. As someone, who very much enjoyed sports, performing arts and being part of the Choral Society when I was at the Grove, I have particularly enjoyed the online music collaborations that the school has produced. If you have not yet seen these, I would encourage you to take a look on the Woodhouse Grove YouTube channel.

Another exciting online development is the school’s Digital Archive, featuring pictures of school life from across the years. This will feature a Search function enabling users to look for pictures for a certain year – or even a certain person! This will be a constantly evolving resource with new pictures being added on a regular basis. I understand that Login details will be sent out to Old Grovians very shortly – watch this space!

I look forward to seeing many of you over the coming year – either in person at events and reunions, or online within the Archive! In the meantime, I wish you and your families all the best for the coming year.

**Sarah Pickles (87-94)**