

Fall 2025

NEWSLETTER



Friends of
Christ's
Hospital

President's Message

Dear Old Blues and Friends of Christ's Hospital,

Welcome to the Fall issue of the FCH newsletter. As the season here in Baltimore begins to change, I am reminded of this time of year at Hertford — "All out" after lunch followed by afternoon lessons to take account of the shorter days, huddling over the radiators in the Day Room as the evenings grew colder, and of course Founder's Day. We would gather in the school hall for a program about the history of the school, a rendition of the Carmen and a parade of the various uniforms worn by the girls, beginning with the infamous Susannah Holmes with her white cap, blue dress, and green pinny!



Here in the US, FCH marks Founder's Day with a gathering of Old Blues and friends for a dinner in a major city. Last year Gilman exchange student and FCH Board Member, Nik Feldman, hosted us in Lexington, Kentucky. This year we met in New York. You can read about this fun event in the pages that follow.

Also included in this issue is an update on our efforts (led by FCH Board Member John Cottage) to develop regional communities of Old Blues; an introduction to two recent additions to the FCH Board; news from the school; and a wonderful interview with Ken McDonald (Lamb B 50-51).

Finally, while FCH exists first and foremost to provide Old Blues with a way to stay connected to the school and to each other, it does, as many of you know, offer a convenient vehicle for any taxpayer in the US, who is inspired by the mission of CH, to make a tax-free gift to the school. We were therefore delighted that this past summer an American donor with no previous connection to CH made a gift of \$2,500,000 to support bursaries at CH - a true reflection that the mission of the school is as compelling today as it was when it was founded.

Looking ahead, we will be marking the 20th anniversary of the Christ's Hospital student exchange program with the Gilman and Bryn Mawr schools in Baltimore with a dinner and celebration on April 18th, 2026. Please make a note of the date and plan to join us if you can. In addition to having the exchange students with us (in full Housey!) school Treasurer Miriam McKay (7s, 76-83) will join us to speak about the school and its direction under the new Head & CEO, Matthew Judd.

As always, we would love to hear from you. Thank you for your engagement with FCH and with Christ's Hospital.

Housey!

Sally O'Brien (Knatchbull-Hugessen, 5's, 70-77)
President, Friends of Christ's Hospital

Ken McDonald: Video Documentary of an American Schoolboy's Memories of CH (1950-51)

A fascinating video documentary has been created to celebrate the 75th anniversary of J. Kenneth McDonald's (Lamb B, 1950-51) year at Christ's Hospital on an English Speaking Union scholarship.

Ken came to Christ's Hospital from Phillips Academy, Andover (a boarding school near Boston, MA) on an ESU British-American Schoolboy Scholarship and the documentary includes his first-hand memories alongside contemporary photographs of life at CH during the austere period when food rationing was still in force immediately following WWII. The film offers an American boy's take on everything from friends and food to ceremonies and the teaching staff.

Ken, now a vital 93 year-old, went on to a distinguished academic career that culminated in him being appointed Chief Historian of the CIA! He still has the Grecians coat that you see in this picture.

The 20-minute film was created by fellow Old Blue Paul Wade (CoLA 55-61), who made the same trip in reverse, spending a year at prep school in Massachusetts on an ESU Scholarship after leaving CH in 1961. You can access the video by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.christs-hospital.org.uk/old-blues-updates/ken-mcdonald-an-american-schoolboys-memories-of-ch/>



FCH Founders Day Dinner 2025

Old Blues and Friends of Christs Hospital gathered for the Founders Day Dinner at Amali Restaurant, New York City on October 18. Twenty one Old Blues and partners from all corners of the US (and beyond), spanning generations, celebrated the founding of CH. A family style feast was reminiscent of a typical CH meal, made more so by the saying of Grace. The Loyal Toasts and a rousing chorus of “Housey!” announced our presence to the Upper East Side.

With robust conversation throughout, the highlight was a post-dinner open table discussion. FCH President Sally O'Brien (5's 70-77) led with an overview of recent events including the 40th anniversary of the girls move to Horsham and a summary of the vision of incoming Head & CEO, Mathew Judd. His vision looks forward to the 500th anniversary of CH in 2052 and recognizes the unique mission of the school.

Discussions reminded us of how CH plays a key role in the lives of so many. Tamara Pinedo (CoIB, GrW 07-14) who made the trip from London, spoke fondly of her relationship with her Governor, Jim Bell (MaA 57-58) and new FCH Board Member Rosh Wright (1's, 7's 57-66). Misha Citron (PeA, GrW 12-17) reminded us of how small the world is as an Old Blue – being told of the event when he ran into Tamara on her flight from London. Oskar Schortz (MdA, GrE, GrW 05-12) and Clemens Vogt (PeB, GrW 14-17) talked about their current work and studies in New York and Boston respectively, and how the school had enabled them to pursue their ambitions.



It was a fabulous evening that brought together Old Blues from across seven decades at CH – although it felt like we had all been there together. Special thanks to George Matcham (PeB 63-70) for organizing the event.

New FCH Board Members

Carl Kirker-Head (BaA, CoIB 70-76)



On leaving CH, Carl read Veterinary Medicine at Magdalene College, Cambridge before traveling, and eventually emigrating, to the United States for specialty training in large animal surgery and a career in academia. After a year at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville), he joined Tufts University in 1984 – where he is currently a Professor (Emeritus as of January 2026) in the Hospital for Large Animals (with a clinical and research focus in orthopedics).

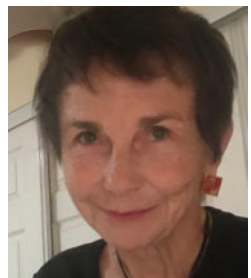
Carl has published widely and presented globally. He has served as an expert witness in arbitration and trial cases; a consultant for multiple health-related businesses; an officer of several small corporations; and was involved in the founding of four biotech companies.

Carl and his wife Mona own and operate an equine boarding, foaling, and rehabilitation farm in central Massachusetts. His eldest daughter Mackenzie lives in Kentucky and works in the racehorse industry while his younger daughter Georgia teaches 8-10-year-olds in Manchester, Connecticut.

Carl - middle Row, third from right



Rosh Wright (1s, 7s 57-66)



After leaving CH, Rosh took her nursing qualifications to become a State Registered Nurse at Westminster Hospital in London. Since then she has used her RN credentials to travel to Edmonton (Alberta), Texas, and California - where she worked at Stanford Children's Hospital before joining the law firm of Gordon and Rees in San Francisco as a Legal Nurse Consultant. Rosh also had a short stint in Saudi Arabia, opening up the pediatric unit at the King Fahad hospital in Riyadh.

Rosh was married to her wonderful Texan husband, Jim Wright, for 12 years before his death in 1993. She subsequently moved to San Luis Obispo on the Central Coast of California, where she is very involved in the acting and theatre community. Her stage name 'Rosh'

was bestowed on her by a highly respected director and producer and she now only uses her legal name, Deborah, for legal affairs!



Rosh - front row, centre

Treasurer's Report

Financial Update - nine months to September 30, 2025

From several significant gifts, FCH has received donations totaling \$2,674,245 in the first three quarters of 2025.

- Trevor Tomkins (MaA, ColB 60-66) former Chair of the FCH board, generously pledged a £30,000 match gift to inspire others to increase their support during the 2025 CH Telephone Campaign, in support of 21 Futures - an urgent effort to save 21 bursary places at risk.
- A special one-time donation of \$90,000 was given by a Hertford Old Blue.
- An anonymous donor gifted \$2,500,000 to fund Bursaries at Christ's Hospital.
- So far \$2,614,600 has been transferred by FCH to Christ's Hospital this year.

Local US Old Blue Groups

In the survey of US Old Blues, conducted at the end of 2024, four out of five people said they would be interested in participating in local Old Blue social events. So, for the first part of this year, Board Members have been contacting Old Blues in areas of the country where there is a significant concentration of Old Blues to arrange local gatherings. Progress to date is as follows:

Chicago Area Old Blues – met on October 12 for a Founder's Day Brunch. Thank you to Belinda Reiser (4s, ColA 79-86), former FCH Board member, for organizing this event.

New York Area Old Blues – Matthew Adams (Lamb B, Middleton B, 1995-02) organized an informal meet-up in Manhattan on November 4th. If you would like be notified of future NYC area events please join the new WhatsApp group by clicking here: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/GpG-d72WtPYQKjQOcCQLall?mode=wwt>

Philadelphia Area Old Blues – Keith Worker (ColA 71-78) is organizing a pub lunch at Yard House at the King of Prussia Mall, 12.30pm on December 6th. Old Blues/Friends are invited. Please contact Keith directly for more information (kworker3@gmail.com).

News from Horsham

Welcoming our new Head & CEO - The new Head and CEO, Matthew Judd, started his new role at CH this term. Matthew said 'I've been looking forward to this moment for a long time, and I'm genuinely excited to get to know the community and help to move the school forward in a modern, progressive way, enabling it to be the very best it can be.'



Model United Nations Conference - At the Wimbledon High School for Girls Model United Nations ten CH pupils represented South Africa and North Korea. Our delegates debated global issues with skill and diplomacy, earning Distinguished Delegation status.

Peer Mentor Training Programme - Several Deputy Grecians were trained as 'listening ears'. They received a distinctive yellow wristband, so they can be easily identified around the site, and a sticker for their door to remind other pupils that they are there to help if needed.

Girls Hockey - 1st XI was crowned champion at the Sussex U18 Tier 3 Tournament on 2 October after an impressive series of matches.

Rugby - 1st XV progressed to the fourth round of the National Schools Vase.

St. Matthew's Day - On 3 October, senior pupils took part in the traditional St Matthew's Day service at St Andrew's Church, Holborn, and then marched to the Guildhall - a powerful reminder of CH's enduring bond with the City of London.



Upcoming Events:

- **School Concert** - 30 November 3:00 pm in Big School.
- Find out what events are coming up here: <https://events.christs-hospital.org.uk/>

Thank you for your support

21 Futures Campaign - Christ's Hospital faces a £1 million rise in annual costs owing to new Government legislation — the equivalent of 21 full bursary places for talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. So it was wonderful to see Old Blues in the US take part in our summer telephone campaign, engaging in conversations with our recent leavers. Your support helped unlock an additional £30,000 in match funding from Trevor Tomkins (MaA, ColB 60-66), a former Chair of the FCH Board.

I encourage everyone to watch the terrific video of Ken McDonald's memories of his time as an exchange student at CH 75 years ago. Back then, when transatlantic crossings took days not hours, exchange pupils went to CH for an entire academic year, (often in preparation for taking the Oxbridge entrance exams). The video captures Ken's uniquely American perspective of life in Britain and at CH in the post-war years.

However hard conditions were back then, Ken 'really liked the life at CH', and that has led to a life-long passion for the school. In recent years, Ken has been a regular attendee of the Baltimore Transatlantic Schools Exchange Dinners and other FCH events, very much part of the East Coast network of Old Blues.

Continuing the FCH mission of building the network of Old Blues in the USA, we are delighted to welcome Rosh Wright and Carl Kirker-Head to the FCH Board. Aside from the diverse experience they both bring to the board they will add FCH reach into California and New England, respectively. Old Blues living in those areas who would like to be better connected with other Old Blues or to attend informal local gatherings should reach out to Rosh (roshactor@gmail.com) or Carl (carl.kirker-head@tufts.edu), respectively, or indeed to any of the Board Members who are within your regional area. If you are not sure who that is you can find out at <https://www.fchusa.org/fch-board/> - or send me a note and I will put you in touch.

We still have further room to add other new Board Members (especially an accountant and a lawyer), so if you have interest in getting involved, and/or you feel your area is underserved, please reach out to me at gmatcham@verizon.net or to any other Board Member you know.

Meanwhile, I have just had the great pleasure of meeting Old Blues at the Founders Day Dinner in New York City, which you can also read about elsewhere in this newsletter.

Please contact me if you have any news or memories that you would like to share with other US Old Blues.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,



George Matcham (PeB, 1963-1970)
Chairman, Friends of Christ's Hospital



Useful Links

FCH website – www.fchusa.org

FCH Facebook Group – www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofchristshospital

CH Old Blues Association website - www.christs-hospital.org.uk/old-blues/

CHOBFA Facebook Page - www.facebook.com/CHOldBlues/

Christ's Hospital website – www.christs-hospital.org.uk

FCH WhatsApp Group - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/GpGd72WtPYQKjQOcCQLall?mode=wwt>