

WOMEN OF SEDBERGH AND CASTERTON

Since the 1600's women have made substantial contributions to Sedbergh School in a variety of ways. 2001 was an important milestone in Sedbergh's history as girls were admitted as pupils for the first time. The merger in 2013 has provided a great opportunity to learn about Casterton School's fascinating history and begin to share this with the wider school community.

Katy de la Rivière, Archivist.

Arranged in chronological order of date first involved with school.

- 1700's
- 1800's
- 1900-60
- 1961-69
- 1970's
- 1980's
- 1990's
- 2000-5
- 2006-10
- 2011-present



Alex Maling
Lupton House 2006-10
Alex became a double international representing Wales in both hockey and lacrosse.



Lauren Crowson
Lupton House 2005-10
Lauren shot with the Ashburton team at Bisley over several years captaining the team in her final year. She was selected to take part in the Great Britain Under 19 Rifle Team Canada tour in 2010. In 2015 Lauren was part of the team that won Gold at the World Championships in America. In 2016 she came 1st in the Queens 1st Stage (out of around 1,000 people) winning a Bronze Medal.

Imogen Schofield

Robertson House 2007-12
Second female Head of School and recipient of a Rank Foundation Scholarship whilst at Sedbergh and a Morehead-Cain Scholarship to attend the University of North Carolina.



Eilidh Sproul
Lupton House 2008-13
Eilidh won the Wilson Run in 2012 and 2013 with times of 1:38:02 and 1:32:10. While at Sedbergh she came 2nd in the English Schools and fell running championship, was county champion in both Cross Country and Track athletics. Now at Loughborough University Eilidh trains with the Loughborough Triathlon Team in their twice daily sessions and continues to compete.

Anna Bidgood

Robertson House 2008-10
Anna studied Earth Science at Oxford. She gained a Blue for rugby and for her final year was President of the Oxford University Women's Rugby Club, as well as holding the roles of President of the Oxford University Exploration Club and the Geology Society.



Lotte Wright
Staff 2009-Present
Lotte was a Morehead-Cain Scholar at the university of Carolina. Currently Deputy Head, she is an English teacher and former Housemistress of Lupton House. Lotte's joy in music has continued during her career at Sedbergh where she sings with the Chapel choir and plays with the school orchestra.



Ella Ferguson
Robertson House 2009-14
First placed girl in the 2014 Wilson Run. Her motto on the day was 'We're on our way and we're flying home'. Ella competed in the Cross Country Nationals during her final year at Sedbergh.

Lucy Thomson

Lupton House 2009-14
Lucy was selected for Scotland U19 Lacrosse in her final year at Sedbergh and toured internationally. Lucy was pleased to see lacrosse flourish at Sedbergh in her later years and particularly enjoyed competing in the national championship in Surrey.

Charlotte Neate

Lupton House 2011-16
Wilson Run 2015 1st Girl. Charlie and a friend ran the Wilson Run qualifier in animal onesies to raise money for a charity in Keyna. With access to early morning swims in the school pool Charlie turned her sights on triathlons. In the 2015 Leeds triathlon Charlie came first in her age group and 4th girl over all at an Olympic distance.

Lucia Sdao

Staff 2011-present
Head of Girls Games. Lucia has worked to raise the profile of Sedbergh girls sport nationwide. She won more than 100 England netball caps during her career and has been an England selector and Northern Thunder coach.



Lady Joyce Singleton-Booth:
Widow of Professor Sir Christopher Booth (P 1937-42). Since Christopher's death in 2012 Lady Singleton-Booth has been working to establish an endowed scholarship in memory of her husband.

Michele Emptage

Staff 2013-present
Senior Academic advisor at Rong Qiao Sedbergh School and Sedbergh School. She was the first Housemistress of Carus House supporting girls making the transition from Casterton School to Sedbergh School.



Tracey Gunning
Staff 2013-present
Teacher of I.T and Business Studies, Housemistress of Carus House. Tracey first arrived in Sedbergh in 2004 with her husband Colin and played an important role in the life of Evans House boys. In Carus House Tracey has worked to establish new traditions ensuring that the youngest house has a strong character and ethos of its own.

Rebecca Milliard

Staff 2013-16
Before coming to Sedbergh, Rebecca studied Sports Therapy at University College Birmingham. In 2016 she was selected to take part in the Women's Lacrosse World Cup – the highest accolade in women's lacrosse.

Maria Mendoza

Lupton House 2013-17
Head of School. Art Scholar and Captain of swimming. Maria is studying Architecture at UCL after leaving Sedbergh.

Storm Straker

Lupton House 2014-16
Storm took up eventing aged 14 and was quickly selected as the youngest member of the British European event team.

Isabella Bennett

Staff 2018-present
Isabella joined Sedbergh in September 2018 as the new Foundation Director after a successful career fundraising in the charity and education sectors.

Female Governors:

- Pamela Veronica Smith OBE JP (1991-2002)
- Mrs Anthea Gay Boulton (1995-1998)
- Mrs Sarah Kathleen Buckley (2000-2005)
- Mrs Susan Elizabeth Bagot DL (2000-2012)
- Mrs Christiana Buchanan (2002-2009)
- Miss Karen Bruce Lockhart (2005-2013)
- Dr Emma J L Waring (2012-present)
- Mrs Louise Bates (2012-present)
- Ms Letitia Ann Dean DL (2012-2013)
- Mrs Claire Theresa Hensman (2013-present)
- Mrs Anna Louise Denney (2013-2019)
- Miss Elizabeth Jane Panton (2013-2017)
- Mrs Gillian Audrey Sykes (2013-2017)

Wilson Run first placed girls:

- 2002 Katharine Harris (nee Vigar) (L 2001-03) 1st Girl 36th place 1:36:14
- 2003 Heather Pimblett (L 2001-03) 1st Girl 46th place. 1:41:17
- 2004 Jacquelyn Boothman (L 2003-04) 1st Girl 24th place 1:35:10 – Record
- 2005 Helen Taylor (R 2001-05) 1st Girl 56th place 1:56:10
- 2006 Victoria Hirst (R 2002-06) 1st Girl 44th place 1:44:30
- 2007 Sophie Dutton (L 2004-08) 1st Girl 42nd place 1:41:44
- 2008 Caroline Fitzner (R 2007-09) 1st Girl 35th place 1:36:32
- 2009 Laura Tinkler (L 2005-09) 1st Girl 65th place 1:47:15
- 2010 Melanie Hyder (L 2009-11) 1st Girl 11th place 1:27:30 – Record
- 2011 Melanie Hyder (L 2009-11) 1st Girl 11th place 1:24:07 – Record
- 2012 Eilidh Sproul (L 2008-13) 1st Girl 21th place 1:38:02
- 2013 Eilidh Sproul (L 2008-13) 1st Girl 19th place 1:32:10
- 2014 Ella Ferguson (R 2009-14) 1st Girl 40th place 1:41:27
- 2015 Charlie Neate (L 2011-16) 1st Girl 18th place 1:30:17
- 2016 Phoebe Whattoff (R 2014-16) 1st Girl 14th place 1:25:00
- 2017 Maria Page (R 2013-18) 1st Girl 13th place 1:30:10
- 2018 Georgina Boyd-Moss (L 2013-18) 1st Girl 15th place 1:28:31
- 2019 Alex Duckitt (R) 1st Girl 13th place 1:28:22



Charlotte Brontë
Casterton School 1824-1825
Author believed to have based 'Lowood' in Jane Eyre on her experience at the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge, the previous site of Casterton School.



Queen Adelaide
Patron of Casterton School who gave £100 per annum between 1837 and 1849. She visited Casterton School in 1840.



Dorothea Beale
Headmistress of Casterton School 1857-1858
Forward thinker in women's education. Went on to be Headmistress of Cheltenham Ladies' College and campaigned as a suffragette.



Honoria Hart
Left £3000 in her will to establish Henry George Hart Scholarships. These were for the benefit of boys entering the school or leaving to enter a University in England, Scotland or Wales. [1924]. This is worth £163,000 in today's money.



Maureen Robertson
Wife of Michael Robertson, W 1929-33. Robertson won a scholarship to attend Sedbergh. He went on to art school but this was interrupted by WW2. After leaving the military he became a teacher but continued to paint throughout his life. His wife was a travel writer who became particularly wealthy after selling the Cooper Roller Bearings company of King's Lynn. After her death she left a trust fund of £4.25m for the benefit of the School to be dedicated to scholarships and bursaries. Robertson House is named after Maureen and her husband.



Sheila Blackwell
Staff 1963-2000
As well as her role in School House hosting boys, parents, Old Sedberghians and visitors in grand style Sheila worked as a nurse in the school sanatorium, worked in the school office, played cello in the school orchestra and could be found creating costumes for many school plays.



Maz Campbell
English and Theatre Studies teacher 1973-2004
She ably assisted her husband Ed during his time as Housemaster of Powell and later Evans. Her golden rule "aside not astride" was enforced with good nature. Maz chose challenging texts and taught them with a sturdy belief in the improving power of great literature. Maz is the first known female academic teacher.



Ruth Davey
Ceramics teacher 1976-2001
Ruth also undertook private commissions and created amongst other things a sculpture of Christ resurrected to hang above the altar of a church in Bradford.



Dorcas Thomas
Staff 1976-2012
After a brief stint as an oboe teacher in 1972 Dorcas joined the staff as a permanent member in 1976. Working with the newly arrived Cressbrook School boys she taught French and later Music before taking over Learning Support in 1989. Dorcas holds the record as longest serving female academic staff member.



Jennifer Thornely
Staff 1977-1991
During her husband's years as Housemaster and Headmaster Jennifer played host at both official and informal school functions. After his retirement she joined the staff officially as a music teacher and continued in the role for 14 years.



Janet Dodds
Maths teacher 1981-1998
As well as quickly proving herself to be an able teacher, Janet was often found behind the scenes of school productions as costume maker-in-chief. She was occasionally persuaded to perform in school plays herself.



Dorothy Baxter
c.1981-1995
In her role as Headmaster's wife Dorothy threw herself in to Sedbergh life completing the Ten in her first term. She took part in and led many musical and theatrical events and coordinated the visit of the Queen and Prince Philip in 1991.



Susan Garnett
Geography teacher 1986-1997
Susan threw herself in to many aspects of Sedbergh life taking pupils abroad, raising money for various trips and school causes. She was treasurer of the Bradford Boys Club.



Elspeth Griffiths
Librarian and Archivist 1989-2007
In her role as Librarian Elspeth nurtured many Sedberghians in their pursuit of education. Working closely with pupils to help them prepare for scholarships, university interviews and examinations her care in helping pupils achieve their goals is not to be underestimated. An indefatigable researcher and historian Elspeth worked to establish the Archive and Heritage Centre before her retirement.



Hayley Christie
Staff 2001-Present
Head of Girls Games, Housemistress of Robertson House. Hayley set up the Girls' Games programme at Sedbergh as well as coaching the 1st netball team from 2001-2011 & Senior tennis from 2001. Hayley is an active member of the Old Sedberghian Committee working to engage young OS women.



Katharine Harris (nee Vigar)
Lupton House 2001-03
First ever female winner of the Wilson Run in 2002 with a time of 1:36:14. Katharine came 2nd in 2001 South Lakes Cross Country Championship senior event and the 2002 Cumbria Cross Country Championships senior event. Katharine was the first female finisher in the 2011 Tough Guy Competition.



Kim Buffoni
Robertson House 2001-06
Kim was a member of the school shooting team who represented Great Britain in both small bore and full bore target rifle shooting for the Athelings (U18) travelling to Canada and GB U19 team to South Africa. Kim was the first girl to receive the famous Sedbergh School brown blazer for contributions to international sport.



Laura Priestley
Lupton House 2001-03
First Sedbergh girl to graduate from Cambridge University. Laura read history before training to be a Solicitor.



Philippa Prall
Staff 2003-Present
First Housemistress of Robertson House, History Teacher, Counter-Bullying Officer, Voluntary Service Co-ordinator and Year 10 Battlefields Trip Commander-in-Chief. She has been a tutor in all of the girls' Houses, sometimes more than once!



Freya Findlay
Robertson House 2003-08
First female Head of School Freya arrived at Sedbergh in 2000 with the first girls to join Sedbergh Junior School. Freya is now a reporter for the News@Star and the Cumberland News.



Gwynnie Parry
Staff 2004-Present
English teacher who has been Housemistress of Marshall House and Lupton House. Gwynnie is a qualified Mountaineering Instructor responsible for climbing and mountain activities in school. She runs the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, and has taken School expeditions to Patagonia, Bolivia, Madagascar and Spain as well as running 'Bush Craft' and 'Dangerous Course for Kids' in the fells around Sedbergh.

Catherine Hirst

Lupton House 2005-07
Catherine was Sedbergh's first Blue for netball at Oxford and the first girl to graduate from Oxford University. She later gained an athletics Blue. Catherine completed the 'Swedish Classic', a gruelling four discipline competition of swimming, running, cycling and the famous Vasaloppet, the cross country skiing marathon.

Emily Hirst

Robertson House 2004-09
First girl Head of School at Sedbergh Junior School in 2003 - 04.

Michelle Lefton

Lupton House 2003-05
Michelle holds the Enduroman Arch to Arc Challenge World Ladies Record. Founder of Watch This Space urban regeneration company which works to create inspiring and uplifting spaces.



Hannah Born
Robertson House 2002-07
Hannah was a Great Britain Shooter. She toured Canada with The Athelings and took part in the World Championship.

Ashley James

Robertson House 2001-05
TV and radio presenter. Ashley's career began while at Sedbergh presenting on Radio Cumbria. Ashley has fronted the Clothes Show and other fashion programmes and has a radio show on Hoxton Radio.



Helen Taylor
Robertson House 2001-05
First female captain of the shooting team Helen was selected for the Atheling Ireland and GB team. She was Captain of the 1st XI hockey team and in 2005 was 1st placed girl in the Wilson Run.

Sue Wallace-Woodroffe
Staff 2001-2015
First Housemistress of Lupton House, Senior Mistress, Deputy Head Pastoral and teacher of Biology. Sue had a particular focus on integration of international pupils and worked to develop the best social programme of any school in the UK.

2001
First girls admitted.

Sally Griffin
Staff 1998-2017
Sally was a valuable member of the English department and Director of Middle School studies and supported many international pupils navigating the peculiarities of English boarding school life.

Jane Rowbotham
Staff 1998-2006
A teacher of History and English arriving from Malsis where her husband had been Headmaster. Jane was a tutor in Lupton House focusing on establishing Danson House, the Pre-Prep department at Sedbergh Junior School. She went on to be Deputy Head of Sedbergh Junior School. Jane tragically died of cancer in 2006.

Amelia Horan

Carus 2016-present
A Roger Lupton Scholar who is achieving music success. Amelia was selected for the BBC Radio 2 Young Choristers of the Year final in 2019 and is a member of the School Chapel Choir which has got through to the last five of BBC Young Choir of the Year in 2020.

Iona Lindsay

Lupton House 2014-16
U18B Scotland Lacrosse 2016, recognised at Sedbergh Sportsman of the Year dinner 2015 as Most Valuable Lacrosse Player.

Harriet Bramwell

Carus House 2013-16
Harriet was top cadet out of 100 at the County of Lancaster cadet competition as well as being top out of 550 cadets on Ashburton Day. She won the Gallician '2 and 10' trophy in Jersey after a tie shoot in which she scored a perfect 25.5. She is currently applying for the GB Under 19 tour to South Africa in Easter 2017 and the British Cadet Rifle team tour to Canada (Athelings) next summer.



Courtney Savage
Lupton House 2012-14
First Roger Lupton Scholar. Selected to play on England netball U18's and U21's. She played at club level in the Northern League for Tameside Seniors and trained with Northern Thunder Superleague squad in Manchester.

Jennifer Macdonald

Staff 2013-present
Jennifer has worked at Sedbergh since the merger with Casterton in 2013 where she was Deputy Head. Prior to this, she worked at Kings' Rochester, Giggleswick School and St. George's Weybridge. She became Housemistress of Lupton in September 2018, having previously been Deputy Housemistress for three years.

Katherine Fleck

Lupton House 2011-16
Selected to represent the UK Cadet Rifle Team on tour in Jersey in August 2015. She also shot for the full Yorkshire team in 2015. 2015/16 she shot small-bore for England Schools twice and was selected as reserve for the British Cadet Rifle Team tour to Canada (The Athelings). She shot for UK Cadets again in 2016 scoring 100 out of 100 in the team match. She is currently reserve for the NRA 2017 tour to the Channel Islands and shoots for Cambridge University.

Abbie Scott

Robertson House 2009-2011
First girl rugby international, made her debut for England in 2015. Since played in the 2017 Women's Rugby World Cup and the 2018 Women's Six Nations. In 2019 she helped England win the Women's Six Nations Grand Slam, scoring tries against Wales and Italy.

Ella Ferguson

Robertson House 2009-14
First placed girl in the 2014 Wilson Run. Her motto on the day was 'We're on our way and we're flying home'. Ella competed in the Cross Country Nationals during her final year at Sedbergh.

Lucy Thomson

Lupton House 2009-14
Lucy was selected for Scotland U19 Lacrosse in her final year at Sedbergh and toured internationally. Lucy was pleased to see lacrosse flourish at Sedbergh in her later years and particularly enjoyed competing in the national championship in Surrey.

Melanie Hyder

Lupton House 2009-11
First placed girl in the Wilson Run in both 2010 and 2011 setting records both years, the second of which still stands. The year after leaving Sedbergh School Melanie won the Great Karrimor trail race (junior) in Latrigg, Keswick. In 2014 she was placed 1st at the Inter-counties fell running championships in Blackburn.