

A Chalet Confab

Schoolgirl Crushes

Esther Hailey "Jan Gill, commenting on my original article, mentions one of my favourite school stories: *To Serve Them All My Days* by R.F. Delderfield. In Part 5, ch 3 we have an amusing episode of a new headmaster, repressed and



uncommunicative who, coming from South Africa, is unaware of certain innocent traditions of English public school life. To quote the relevant bits would take too much space. Put simply the Head, Mr Alcock, suspected homosexuality among some of the boys. Instead of making informal enquiries of the staff, who all knew these were innocent relationships, he went off half cocked and put out edicts against it. These various relationships were simply a 'personal attachment between a boy in Upper School,

and a boy who was working his way through the Lower School'. Often this took the form of a captain of a sporting team encouraging and informally coaching an up and coming young player. The ongoing war between the staff and Alcock (in this particular issue anyway) came when Howarth, one of the housemasters, received a letter from a parent asking if one of the senior boys he (the father) knew could keep an eye on his young son who was coming to the school thus confirming the innocence of these relationships. This all sounds very bald giving you the briefest headlines of this episode so I would encourage you to read the book. It is quite brilliant. I could go on and on about it but for once I will restrain my enthusiasm. My point is that Delderfield, who taught at six schools and one commercial college, is making it quite clear that homosexuality is not necessarily present in what he calls 'personal attachments'. I notice also that in Kipling's *Stalky and Co* there is no hint of homosexuality but admittedly Kipling does not deal with 'personal attachments' i.e. what in a girls' school are called 'crushes'. Interestingly he deals with the opposite phenomenon: bullying."

Mark Taha "*To Serve Them All My Days* was an excellent book and also a TV serial. The 'friendship discouraging' was in the reign of the unpleasant headmaster Alcock. The first headmaster, Herries, and David himself were almost too good to be true, the kind of headmasters schoolboys would have liked to have had!"

Janet Stow "I loved *To Serve Them All my Days*, I have recently passed on my Delderfields but I have saved this one. As far as crushes are concerned I can see

softly falling snow. As all good Chalet girls do, we went equipped with hob-nailed boots (well, modern crampons actually) and bars of chocolate. I found this web page <http://www.austria.org/> which has a link called 'Video Tours Through Austria'. There is a video of the Achensee, which is quite good - even if the commentary is in German. Might be interesting to other people."

Jacqueline Cooke "I have never been to the Tyrol, but I have been to Bavaria. As you enter the villages, there is a carved wooden chalet sign with 'Gruss Gott' and the name of the village on it. I was so excited when I saw them. The people there still use 'Gruss Gott' as their greeting."

Bargain Finds

Janet Stow "The only 'free' book I ever found was being used at the local



auction to prop up the leg of a table. It was clearly a Chalet and leaving my husband to guard it I found an alternative book to use as a prop and rescued it. It was *Redheads* and when I went to find the porter to ask how I could pay for it, he, lovely man, said it was only a children's book and I could have it if I wanted it. The most unlikely story, one I always tell if 'doing a talk' is How I Got *School by the River*. A gentleman in the north of England had a habit of sending me a box full of books periodically and I would send him an appropriate donation. This was in the 1970s. One day a box arrived and I opened it. The books were arranged spine upwards and I read the titles in increasing gloom. Nothing of any

interest. Then ... my eye fell on a red book, *The School by the River*! Convinced I was dreaming I closed my eyes, counted to ten, then opened them again, it was still there. I had to sit down and have a cup of coffee. Needless to say the donation was at least twice as high as usual."

Eyes and Teeth

Ashwini Baitmangalkar "In response to some members' comments on teething. We have lots of babies at the moment in my family and none of them have had bad nights because of teeth. One of my aunts does agree that her daughter seems to drool a little more when teeth are on the way but she has never had to walk her to sleep, as Joey has had to do with all her children. Babies are usually given something hard to bite on and no one bothers about them much after that in my family. And none of us is worse for wear."

Mark Taha "Re Anne James's comment about monocles, it was Jemima Carstairs of Cliff House who wore one. The other school was called Morcove."

Janet Stow "My friend's grandson has to wear glasses and is the envy of the

always calls Robin a baby. Her favourite characters are Juliet and Madge (and Joey of course). Laura won't remember but I have read the books to her already when she was a small baby. She didn't sleep so, out of desperation and in an attempt to keep me awake, I read the whole series to her. At least Laura will be able to read all the books in order, which is more than I could. I started reading them when I was nine years old - I started *Jo* several times but I couldn't get past the Appalachian nursery rhyme. I assumed Jo was a boy and gave up. However it was a very hot summer and having read everything else I tried again and this time I persevered. My primary school library had about 20 hardback books, which I read over and over again. I was 27ish by the time the final paperback *Joey goes to the Oberland* was published."

Names

Christine Ward "I liked Ruth Endredy's piece about names. Sarah seemed to be a very popular name for housemaids in the early days of the last century. The name has been a popular one, on and off, over the centuries. Sally is a derivative of Sarah, which is why Jo would think of the song *Sally Go Round the Moon* as being appropriate for Sarah the teacher. Sadie is another name derived from Sarah. Susan Coolidge, the author of *What Katy Did*, was known as Sarah, Sally and Sadie by various friends, relatives and acquaintances and as Susan by her adoring readership, of course!"

Dorothy Waterhouse "I always thought that 'Sally' went round the moon on a Sunday afternoon not a Saturday - regional differences - aren't they wonderful?"

Janet Stow "We had only one Sarah in the school in the 50s, we called her Sally. I did not teach a Sarah until the 1980s. I have three friends called Elizabeth, known as Liz, Lis and Betty respectively. Coincidentally Liz is an United Reformed minister, Lis is the daughter of a Church of England canon and a reader, and Betty is a Methodist minister. I've only just realised this."

Mark Taha "In the 1948 film *Elizabeth of Ladymead* - Anna Neagle played Liz who, in 1946, dreamed herself to be Victorian mouse Beth, Edwardian suffragette Elizabeth and 1920s flapper Betty."



A Dolls House

Kathy Endelman "Tom Gay inspired me to build a dolls house. I cheated a little by buying a kit because I am not a carpenter. I glued the house and then painted it. The outside was white with a grey roof, and the window frames and door were painted dark green. There are four bedrooms in it. The upstairs rooms are a light green. The living

another member got all excited cos she is a CS fan and didn't think she would find another one! So we have now taken over the message board with all things Chalet School. Hello Katherine Tyack - what would Miss Annersley think of us sitting in a virtual bar half the evening!!!!"

The Crown of Success

Kathy Endelman "If anybody wants to read a chapter of *The Crown of Success* by A.L.O.E and are on the internet then they should go to:
<http://www.marlodge.supanet.com/museum/aloe.htm>"

Ek Dum

Stella Davey "Having just come across 'ek dum' for the second time in a short space of time, whilst re-reading the CS series, I decided to put myself out of my misery and turned to the 'Google' search engine on my PC. It came up with the information that the phrase is used as a colloquialism in some of Salman Rushdie's books and gave its meaning as: 'all at once, suddenly'. No wonder Dick used the phrase, working out in India! And no wonder that those of us who have studied Latin, didn't recognise it as such! It certainly makes sense in *Highland Twins* (HB p.269), where Joey is planning to come up to the school to help with the problem of Betty Wynne-Davies. '...I've plenty of petrol, for a wonder, so I'll get Boanerges out, and hop up ek dum' - At once/straight away."



Joey's Figure

Ashwini Baitmangalkar "Have you ever wondered how Joey managed to have so many children but never lose her figure? She also never seems to have any of the problems that are associated with childbirth. I have a friend who has a lot of back pain - a direct result of having four children with just a gap of a year or two between each says her doctor. Joey doesn't seem to have any trouble acting like a schoolgirl and running up the stairs, or swimming as well as the best swimmers (who, incidentally, are half her age), she seems to be able to climb cliffs as well as manage to write and keep house. Though I agree that Anna does most of that."

Princess Under Scrutiny

Mark Taha "Joey and Grizel were in different forms, and with the inevitable 'hierarchy' as the school expanded. After they'd left, it was different, especially

as Grizel was either a mistress at the school or living with Joey in Guernsey. And wasn't it natural that Joey and Madge would have been together in off duty hours? They offered Matron Webb the job as Matron without an interview? What were they thinking of? And surely they could have found a local girl - perhaps the Austrian parents could have spared a servant!"

Tom Tackles

Christine Harris "Thank you very much for my copy of *Tom Tackles*. I think the illustrations are great. Has anyone else noticed that the person standing to the left of the stile on the colour frontispiece looks like Penelope Keith? I am looking forward to re-reading *Tom* when I can give plenty of time to my reading."

Olivia Herrmann "Thank you for *Tom Tackles the CS*. I never had the impression that I really knew who Tom was, but the book changed that."



CS Collections

Emma Taylor "Recently, I was telling FOCS member Joanne Howe in a letter how I now only need two more Chalet books to complete my collection! As I pointed out in my reply to how lucky I was - I have been collecting since I was 12 years old (I am now aged 26) and I still search charity/second hand bookshops in the hope of those bargain hardbacks! I am delighted to see that you will be publishing *The Lost Staircase* which I read whilst on holiday in Dublin last year and absolutely loved it."

Charlotte Smith "I just felt the urge to share with you and the other members of FOCS some fairly momentous news (well for me at least!). After the last Sales & Wants catalogue I received a card telling me that I had been successful in the draw for *Althea*. And that was that, after over 17 years of collecting Chalet School books I finally have the full collection! It may be a motley collection of paperbacks, hardbacks and GGBP reprints, but I can now start at the beginning and work my way through to the very end. I suppose now I'll have to start saving up to get the full set in hardback. Well, either saving up or winning the lottery! Not many of my friends understand my excitement about this, but I think I may have convinced my flat-mate of the joy of reading Chalet School books!"

Frances Bailey "It's been interesting reading other members' Chalet book collecting stories in *Getting to Know Each Other*. Mine is much the same as many others, originally reading the books as a child, then coming back to them in the 1970s when I discovered that paperback versions were available.

However, a little later (it must have been late 1970s, early 1980s I think, I can't remember) I put an ad in the *Exchange & Mart* for CS hardbacks and had loads of replies! I managed to get quite a number of books for my collection for really silly (cheap!) prices, - how lucky I was, as I've seen those same books advertised for exorbitant sums now - Oh! To be able to turn the clock back!"

Dorothy Havis "I am currently reading through the Chalet School books for the umpteenth time - it's like painting the Forth Bridge - when I've finished *Prefects* it's back to *The School at the Chalet*. I have the entire 59 in paperback, and have enjoyed reading other short stories in the two magazines, written by some of your members."

Jo to the Rescue

Ashwini Baitmangalkar "Are there any members who found *Rescue* boring? It answers many questions like who Phoebe Peters was etc, but overall it was a disappointment to me. Anyone out there who shares the same views?"

Edelweiss Badge

June Gray "My friend (not yet a FOCS member) still has her little edelweiss badge from her time as a member of the Chalet Club, and treasures it along with her book collection."



Accidents at the Chalet School

Mark Taha "How would Jem or Jack walloping small boys damage the school? Although there was surely a risk of their fathers turning our doctors into patients! Commandment: thou shalt not wallop thy neighbours' kids!"

Guide Games

Pamela Dale "The only game my Guide Company enjoyed was British Bulldogs with its opportunity for mayhem. I expect that modern Guides are not allowed to play it due to health and safety regulations. My inner town company used to practise bandaging and, if it went quiet, usually discovered they'd lashed the patrol leader to a chair and decamped."

Felicity Finds Her Feet

Andrew Parsell "I liked the story of Felicity Maynard. Splendid stuff!"

Mark Taha "I hope Vicki keeps up the good work."

Gaily Jacketed Books

Olivia Herrmann "A comment Karen Stewart made caught my attention while I

themselves did they decide to wash, and which bits were left for another day? It would have made more sense for them to have had a rota in the mornings whereby some of them bathed properly and got clean all over, and the others washed at washbasins. They can't have had time to do more than jump in the bath and out again just to show willing, can they? How did they fit in teeth cleaning and going to the lavatory? Do you think they'd have showers nowadays if the school still 'existed' - or would they stick to baths for some reason?"

Dorothy Waterhouse "Children certainly had dressing gowns in the 1930s?"



Not true for many poorer families. I was very much a young adult before I had my first dressing gown. A dressing gown was an unnecessary extra where money was tight. I thought that one point of central heating was that folk woke up to a house which was warm. Is Kate Eggleston unusual that she 'switches hers on' after her shower in the morning?"

Janet Stow "Estelle Pover made me laugh with her bathroom chat; like her I never put my nightwear back on in the morning; getting out of bed and into the shower once is bad enough. I run starkers back to the bedroom; as I am in my sixties and very over-weight this is not a pretty sight but my poor husband heroically puts up with it. I've never had a dressing gown I have liked as much as my wartime one; my aunt made my sister and me one each out of a grey army blanket. Mine was trimmed with blue cord she unpicked from an old garment, and my sister's with red bias binding which was still relatively easy to buy. We loved them they were so warm and cosy in an unheated house."

Keeping Freudesheim Tidy

Ashwini Baitmangalkar "Have any of you wondered how Joey managed to keep Freudesheim tidy? I remember reading that it was a pension and that's why it's so big. All Joey had in the way of help was Anna and the Coadjutor. Then the girls are usually off at school or visiting their friends. And till the end of the series Joey has children around her. It could be that Joey was very effective at time management and used her resources most economically, still, it doesn't account for her super human achievements does it? Unbelievable I call it."

Hobbies Club

Mark Taha "I was surprised Herr Laubach didn't know about the Hobbies Club."

Law and the Chalet School

Jacqueline Armstrong "The article by Kelisiana Thynne was of particular interest, because I worked for a firm of solicitors for 15 years. My eldest grandchild hopes to read Law in London next September."

Mark Taha "Grizel obviously didn't know and never thought of taking legal advice. I'd love to have been a fly on the wall when she confronted her stepmother as an adult - unless she was still afraid of someone who seems to have been a cold, unfeeling hypocrite, a thoroughly nasty piece of work. I can imagine her beating Grizel but not cuddling her."

Quarantine

Ruth Jolly "Phil Maynard does indeed have polio, and this illness provides what, for me, is one of the most moving moments in the series, when Jo breaks down and Miss Annersley tries to comfort her (*Two Sams* p178-179). Miss Annersley points out, 'Phil is in God's hands. She could not be safer.' and Joey responds with total honesty, 'I know, but it's not a lot of comfort at this moment.' Any mother who has struggled to maintain her faith in the face of her children's suffering will identify with this. The other

notable polio-sufferer is Cherry Christie (*CS and the Island*), though at that era it tended to be called IP - infantile paralysis - but it was the same illness. Cherry is already on the mend when she enters the series, and is acutely sensitive about her leg-irons, as well as having lost all her confidence and sociability as a result of her experience. Again

I find this entirely true to life. It is a little surprising that Phil suffers polio in a book published in 1967, when inoculations had been available since at least the mid-1950s. I suppose if you take a strict dating scheme, counting from the birth of the triplets in 1939, this would only be 1957 or 1958, but even so you'd have thought the child of a great doctor like Jack would have had all the latest treatments and preventatives - I know that, as a doctor's daughter, I was one of the very first people in Britain to be vaccinated against measles. I suppose this is just one of those episodes where EBD was still living in the past."

Christine Ward "I too remember epidemics of mumps, measles, etc. at school when I was a child. We all seemed to pick up these illnesses and parents treated them as an ordinary part of childhood for the most part. Except for these diseases which we were all 'expected' to get sometime in our childhood, most of us remained extremely healthy and our parents liked us to get the childhood diseases so that they would be 'out of the way' before we were grown up. I also remember the polio epidemics and the fear of paddling in rivers and swimming



Slang

Jacqueline Armstrong "I went to three different schools in south Manchester, but have no recollection of being pulled up for slang. I still sometimes use words like 'jolly', 'spiffing' and 'frock' instead of dress. I would be interested to know if slang was much used in other parts of the country during the 1930s onwards?"

Chalet Girls Get Together - Honorary Member - Dublin

Emma Taylor "It is nice to be known as the honorary Irish member! Hopefully, one day, in the none-too-distant future I will be there for a meeting."

Managing Servants

Christine Ward "I, too, could never understand Anna turning down the chance of marriage and choosing to stay with Joey. She obviously loved children (to have put up with such a lot of them!) and I would have thought that she'd have wanted to marry and have some of her own. Joey does seem to put pressure on her to keep her running after the Maynard family instead of having a proper home of her own and, I believe, makes Anna feel disloyal for even thinking about such a thing! Doesn't Joey ever feel she is being selfish in making Anna feel guilty about wanting - or even thinking about - leaving her? I think, though, that many 'nannies' of that era were treated as though they were wrong and wicked to think of leaving the family they worked for until the mistress of the house graciously allowed them to go - often not until the children in her care were old enough to go off to boarding school or no longer need nannying. The nanny was expected to give up all hopes of a private life of her own - did the mistress imagine that her employee was not entitled to a life outside the home of her employer?"



Mark Taha "The maids obviously had to 'take what they could get'; the combination of poverty and high unemployment meant the employers held all the cards. EBD mentioned Austria's poverty, as we know - as did Maria von Trapp in the original book of *The Sound of Music*."

Comfort Reading

Emma Taylor "Many members often say they find EBD a comfort when recovering from an illness. I have had a couple of serious illnesses this year, and once I was on the road to recovery, and starting to climb the walls, I took to my collection gleefully as nothing else interested me at each time. I have to agree that they certainly helped!"

The Lorna Books

Janet Stow "I am so glad that people liked *Lorna*, these two books have always been my two favourite non-Chalets. As a girl I was convinced that *Stepsisters* was called *Cousins for Lorna* and spent years looking for it. It would be lovely to know that I was right and it's out there somewhere!"

Two Lucky Girls

Mark Taha "Pity the Chalet School seemed to be against popular music. Are any of Elinor's ex pupils in FOCS, or have you heard from any of them? I tried *Friends Reunited* but, hardly surprisingly, there was nobody from Margaret Roper." [We do have some of EBD's ex pupils as members, and we are also in touch with a number of others. Ed]

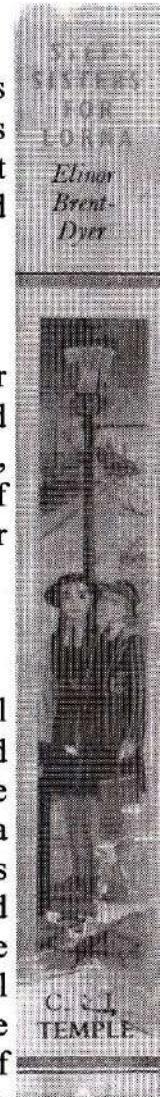
Spotted Dick

Christine Ward "We used to get Spotted Dick for pudding at school quite often; all so-called 'sponge' puddings at school were called 'stodge' and we had 'stodge' at least twice a week, if not more. We also had a pastry based pudding with currants laid on the pastry and a sort of custardy filling poured over it - this was known as 'flies graveyard'. It was served with horribly watery custard, which tasted nothing like the custard we had at home. My mother's sponge puddings and pastries were lovely - but school dinners in general were nothing to write home about and we often came out of the dining room still very hungry and had to fill up on sweets that one of the girls who went home for dinner brought back with her (girls who stayed for school dinners weren't allowed out of the school gates in between 9am and when we left at 4pm)!"

Racism

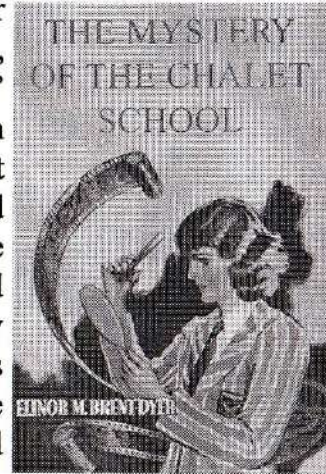
Helen McClelland "When Carla Bennett wonders (No.63, p.39) 'if Elinor had ever met a black person' she is perhaps forgetting the two little Ethiopian princesses who were pupils at the Margaret Roper School. And surely Elinor, in making arrangements for the two girls, must also have had contact with adult members of the Ethiopian Legation -- or whatever (at a guess it wouldn't have been an Embassy in those days)."

Janet Stow "Hurray for Ruth Jolly and a word of common sense. This is such a 'generation' question. I know some people hate 'nigger'; it really does not bother me. I learnt to recite *Ten Little Nigger Boys* with actions with my sister



Tedder

Stella Davey "What is the significance of 'Tedder'? In *Jo to the Rescue*, Phoebe is longing to catch a glimpse of the new people at The Witchens and Reg Entwistle assures her there is no hurry to get her outside because '... They wasn't halfway up the bank, and you know what sort of pull Tedder's Bank is....' Then in *Mystery*, the film the girls are going to see in half-term is *Tedder's Cove*. Is it just a coincidence that Elinor picked the name in *Jo to the Rescue* and then used it later in her short story? Or, was it a tribute to Vice Marshall Arthur Tedder, who as deputy Supreme Allied Commander under General Eisenhower, worked closely with him to plan the D-Day landings? VM Tedder was not a favourite with Winston Churchill, who felt that he was too much under the influence of the Americans and had doubts about carrying out heavy bombing raids on France before the invasion. VM Tedder became Chief of the Air Staff in 1946. He died in Surrey, on June 3rd, 1967. Could Elinor have met him? What do you think?"



Head Girl - Marilyn Evans

Mark Taha "Was Marilyn Evans the only head girl never to actually appear in the CS series?"

Mood Books

Jacqueline Cooke "My Chalet School one would be *Exile*, but overall *Moon in Scorpio* by Robert Neill. He wrote about a dozen historical novels, including *Mist Over Pendle* as mentioned in (I think) *Richenda*."

Terms of Endearment

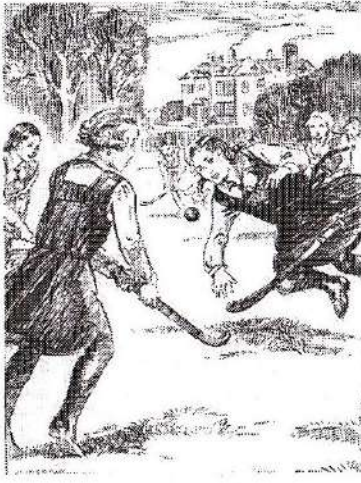
Dorothy Waterhouse "In *Gerry Goes to School*, Elinor's first book, the headmistress calls her pupils 'dear'. This is repeated many times in the Chalet books. More understandable in a boarding school perhaps, but even there I would have thought it unusual. As a teacher in a comprehensive school I had good relationships with the Sixth Form pupils (and others) but I would NEVER have called them 'dear'."

Liberty Bodices

Mark Taha "I remember actress Sue Nicholls mentioning wearing a liberty bodice at school, in about 1960, I think."

Against The Norm In Boarding School Stories

Janet Stow "Oh, how I sympathise with Mark Taha, every games lesson the cry would go up. 'It's not fair, we had Janet last week, THEY should have her this week!' Always selected last for any team I would cross my fingers that the class would have an odd number of girls present and slide behind the pavilion with my book. One of my reports simply read: 'Who is Janet Sewell?'



Christine Ward "I too sympathise with the girls who prefer reading to games; one of the things I would have hated about the CS would have been the lack of privacy to sit and read, and the way that even supposed 'leisure time' was stuffed full of games and outdoor activities! I was always the last to be picked for a team in any school game, and was only picked by default

really. I never got a good comment on my school report in the games column - we non-games-loving lot tried to get out of them as much as possible and lurked over at the far side of the smaller hockey pitch, well away from the games mistress, and discussed boys! (Real little Joan Bakers, we were!)."

Magnificent

Olivia Herrmann "Thank you for a great mag as usual! It arrived just in time to start another 'book phase'! I hadn't read any school stories for a while, focusing on Fantasy instead, but the mag changed that. I ran up to my room and was delighted to discover that *Clover*, *The New Girl* and *Nancy*, *Lorna at Wynyards* and *Summer Term* were all unread. Aren't I lucky?!"

Menna Phillips "Many thanks for the May FOCS magazine. As usual it is full of all sorts of fascinating items - a good read. Also one gets the feeling of a really friendly society - such a family feeling about the magazine."

Kim Downing "What an excellent read the May magazine was. One of my favourite parts has always been the Confab section and it was especially nice to read the comments and *Getting To Know Each Other* from new members. And how fascinating to read Alison Hicks' article about Wigtown - I must confess that I'd never heard of it before then! Tricia Green's *Bargain Finds* made me positively drool and as if that weren't enough there were no less than two wonderful stories. I loved Katherine Bruce's story about Gertrud Becker and Vicki Langdon's *Felicity Finds Her Feet* was just excellent. Felicity was one of those members of the Maynard family I always felt we didn't get to know quite as well as others and it was nice that Vicki had written about her. In my opinion the standards of the stories sent in by members are just getting higher with each magazine."

Louise Johnson “Just a quick note to say how much I enjoyed the latest magazine. Excellent as usual. I would also like to say a big thank you for all the work you do, both for FOCS and GGBP. I am often a silent member, but I really do appreciate all the parcels of magazines and books that land on my doormat!”

Joy Bagster “Another great read from FOCS. I don’t know how you manage to get such a great magazine together. When it comes, everything is put aside and I settle down for the next few hours. I feel I know some of the contributors from their articles.”

The Fate of Gertrud Becker

Mark Taha “Recognised Gertrud Becker at once? I was a bit surprised - she was only at the school for a few weeks six years before. I’d assumed that her mother had been in Denmark when the Germans arrived with inevitable results. Surely, had she come to Britain in time, they’d have put her in touch with her daughter? I found the older girls shushing younger ones for criticising the Germans unconvincing and unpatriotic as well, apart from my belief in free speech! And would the authorities have smiled on a school founded in Austria, with compulsory German days, not allowing criticism of the enemy in wartime? Surely most Britons took the Captain Mainwaring view-‘a nation of automatons ruled by a lunatic who looks like Charlie Chaplin.’ In my opinion, their great fault is their strictly observing regulations.”

High Finance

Dorothy Waterhouse “I am just getting to the end of re-reading all the Chalet books. Just at the moment Mary Lou, Verity and Mrs Carey are coming out to Switzerland because Mrs Carey is dying. The advice given was that only time in that climate would be of any help. Where did they get the money from? I think of many hundreds who would die - Switzerland would be out of the question. I am also reading *Gerry Goes to School* (I usually have about four books on the go at the same time, one in each room (including the bathroom)). In *Gerry* it is advised that Cecil needs to ‘not be in England during the winter months’. Eventually he and his mother do spend the winter in Europe. There are 10 children plus Gerry; the three girls (plus Gerry) were at a school where fees were paid. ‘The living at Mordown was not a large one’. Just where did the money come from?”

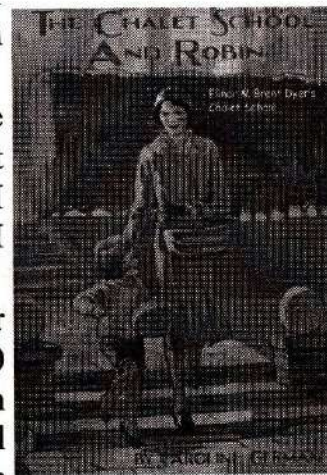


The Chalet School and Robin - One Year On

Dorothy Waterhouse "Reading Caroline German's article - another word which EBD over uses is 'luscious' a word I rarely hear. I look forward to reading her book about Juliet's first term as head girl. Keep it up Caroline."

Kim Downing "How exciting to read that Caroline German is currently writing about Juliet Carrick's first term as Head Girl. I for one hope it makes publication. I enjoyed *The Chalet School and Robin* so much that I eagerly await another offering from Caroline!"

Mark Taha "I didn't think the 'Specials' were any older than other Sixth Formers. Girls seeming to be over 20 years old when they left is an EBDism, surely? Although there were a few blokes at my school who stayed on until aged 19. Betty was only five when sent away. I'd surmise that she eventually became a 'GI bride', for some reason. Elizabeth certainly stayed fond of her, as she tried to save her from expulsion. I must say that I found Betty's 'vulgar' joke funny and didn't like Elizabeth's stuffy response!"



Hawk-eye Jo???

Jean Parsons "In the May issue I do agree with people who liken Joey to Hawkeye. I also love *Mash*. My son is collecting them on DVD and of course has to check they are ok so I get to see them too as they gave me a DVD player for Christmas."

Epidemics Again

Mark Taha "I believe a young Francis Chichester missed the Armistice in 1918 because he was down with flu at Marlborough. There were so many sufferers that the sick lay on the floor."

Pockets for Hankies

Dorothy Waterhouse "A friend and I were talking the other day as we were searching for a hankie. Where does one put a hankie on a hot summer day when you are just wearing a summer dress? In the pocket of your navy knickers. Truly the pockets were there. If there wasn't a pocket there you would put the hankie 'up' the knicker leg, the elastic holding it safely."

(Tom) Michael Carey

Mark Taha "I've only read the paperback version of *The Chalet School and the Island*, but thought Cmdr Christy's first name was Michael. How could all the

girls' suitcases be packed into two cars? Coaches, surely?"

Jane Harris "This is another EBDism. In *Island* he is referred to as Tom but later in the series becomes Michael. Someone obviously drew EBD's attention to this error and in the hardback of *Changes* (page 18) she has Commander Carey say that Tom was his 'old ward-room name . . . It was only when Carey began to realise that quite a lot of people though I was "Thomas" and we had some bother over a legal matter that she suddenly decided to use my proper name.' "

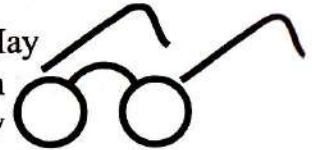
School in Switzerland

Olivia Herrmann "I've been re-reading the old annuals, they are just as great as they were the first time I read them! But what really amused me was, in the 1999 annual (what a long time ago!) in *School in Switzerland* Sara Bond wrote about her Chalet School in Les Avants. My weekly train ride takes me through Les Avants, and the 'ex-Chatelard' building is in plain view of the train! I never knew."

Mix-up!

Frances Bailey "Nice to see one of my items in print (p32 *Accidents at the Chalet School*). However, another of mine is printed on p16, one of those under the heading of "Eyes and Teeth", but has been credited to Mark Taha! – I wonder if he's noticed yet!"

Mark Taha "I didn't make the comment on p 16 in the May mag - you've got me mixed up with someone else! I was born in 1959, have worn glasses since I was 12, and don't have any children!"



Clarissa "Mea culpa, mea culpa. This appears to have been totally my fault. I apologise to both Frances and Mark, and to anyone else to whom it has happened."

Patriotic Buttons

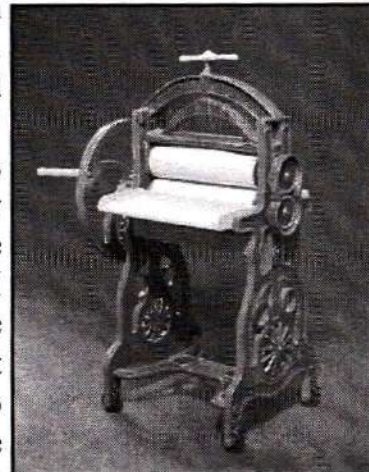
Christine Ward "I like *There'll Always Be An England*, and many of the songs from the 1940s, such as *A Nightingale Sang in Berkley Square* and other sentimental ditties. I was brought up listening to my parents' 78rpm records of Deanna Durbin, Charlie Kunz, Vera Lynn, etc. I think lots of those songs kept 'our boys' going during the war and reminded them of home."

Emma Taylor "Pauline Forman's comment about *There'll Always Be An England* made me smile. At the home I work in, we have a resident who always calls out this when we assist her to stand up. I never knew it was an actual song – so thank you for enlightening me, Pauline! We have a CD of WW2 songs

Estelle Lumb "I enjoyed Jacqueline Armstrong's article about life in the 1930s. I grew up in Bootle in the late '40s/early '50s and well remember the heavy flat irons, though we heated ours on an oven next to the fire, not in the fire itself. We also called the frame for drying clothes which hung from the kitchen ceiling a 'creel' not a 'maiden'. The 'maiden' was for drying clothes in front of the fire. Maybe these were local variations or were imported from Devon or Ayrshire, where my maternal grandparents came from."

Mark Taha "I remember Margaret Powell's memoirs *Below Stairs*. Ironically, many employers were for marriage but against boyfriends."

Dorothy Waterhouse "I e liked Jacqueline Armstrong's article on *Life in the 1930s*. Mostly so true. I remember 'turning the handle' of the mangle, they were usually wooden rollers. A couple of things I also remember; the stove had to be blackleaded at least once a week, the outside steps into the yard and at the entrance to the passage were 'whitened' every week (after being scrubbed) and the yard swept with a hard brush. One thing I disagreed with. Before we had carpets (couldn't afford them) we would put cloths on our shoes and slide on the floor to polish it. Good fun. Jacqueline says 'quite an ordinary household would consist of at least four servants'. The 'quite ordinary' houses which I knew had the father, a man who was 'on the dole'. At the best he would be working for low wages, far too low to pay any servants. I remember the 'dolly blue' and the irons heated over the coal fire. I often wonder how the modern young wife would cope if she had to bake a cake in the oven at the side of that same coal fire. We knew about dampers and had to adjust both the damper and the coal on the fire to make sure that the maximum heat went under the oven, no



thermostats - and we had some super cakes and, at the weekend only, the joint. We had one gas ring on which we would boil the kettle for tea (this had a rubber pipe attached to the gas at one end and the ring at the other, a butterfly key turned it on and off). All vegetables potatoes and greens were boiled in pans over the coal fire. No sarcasm - they were happy days even though we children helped with the chores and washing and wiping pots by us was just normal."

Janet Stow "This was fascinating and a lot of it rang loud bells with me but I do have one quibble. My grandfather was a bricklayer. He struggled to send his sons (pot to the daughters!) into minor professions; my father was trained as a draughtsman. It was his proudest boast that he helped to design Mulberry Harbour without knowing what he was doing. I went to training college and became a teacher, another step up the ladder my father felt. My son went to university and has qualifications and a salary higher than his great-grandfather