

Sawston
Village College

Alumni News

Spring 2019
Issue 8



Welcome

Welcome to Issue 8 of **Alumni News**, our newsletter for former pupils of Sawston Village College.

We have had a busy spring term. If you would like to know what we have been up to, please take a look at our termly magazine 'The Fountain', which is compiled by members of

the Senate and can be read online here: www.sawstonvc.org/news-and-community/fountain-magazine. Our latest Fountain magazine was our 59th

edition, meaning we have been producing this particular magazine for almost 20 years. If you have any stories about this magazine or earlier school magazines, we would love to hear them. We are always keen to hear school memories from our alumni.

This newsletter focuses on two members of our teaching staff, Miles Cragg and Emma Cracknell, who are both former pupils of the school and who are now working in Music and Drama respectively, both having been encouraged in these subjects by inspirational teachers themselves while at school. In interviewing them for this newsletter, we discovered that both had photos from their time at school, with Miles Cragg having a photograph of himself in Year 7, which was published in an earlier school magazine, and we are delighted to reproduce this here.

If you have news or would like to be featured in this publication, please do get in touch. You can contact us at alumni@sawstonvc.org. Happy Easter!

Mr Jonathan Russell, Principal



Miles Cragg, Music Teacher

Can you give a summary of who you are and when you were a pupil at Sawston Village College?

I am Miles Cragg, and I now teach Music at Sawston Village College, where I was a pupil between 1998 and 2003. I graduated in 2008 and worked for a church in Newcastle before training to teach.

What was your favourite subject at school and why?

My favourite subject was Music, and the opportunities at Sawston Village College were second to none, as were the teachers, Janet Macleod and Alan Broadbent. They played such an enormous role in encouraging me and helping me develop my talents.

What is your best memory of being a pupil at Sawston?

When I was in Year 8, I sang as part of the children's choir in a performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 at the Royal Albert Hall. What an experience! I got to sit next to the trombones which, as a trombonist myself, was thrilling. Mahler 8 remains my all-time favourite classical work.

What do you think you gained from having been a pupil at Sawston Village College?

I have gained the ability to try things and keep working at them. When I started at Sawston Village College, I would gladly try things out but quickly give up if I could not do something. I still remember turning up to the first rehearsal of Jazz Band thinking I would make a great jazz trombonist - and then sneaking out half way through when I could not play the music. It was not long before Mrs Macleod and Mr Broadbent were on my case, practically forcing me to come back and try again. They got other pupils to help me, and by the summer term I was playing solos!



Miles with pupils in a workshop.

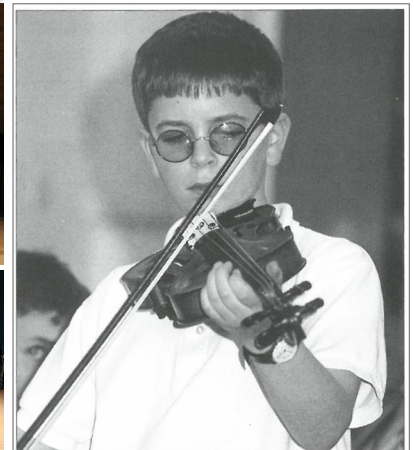


What advice would you give to any current pupils who are interested in teaching as a career?

It is a fabulously rewarding career if you are genuine in your desire to nurture young minds and characters. My advice would be to take any opportunity to lead a group, or help someone with work, and gain some work experience before training.

What are your plans for the future?

I can see myself teaching at Sawston Village College for a good many years - perhaps I will be here forever, as were so many of the teachers who taught me. I like to establish myself as part of the furniture and fabric of an institution, so that will take a while! I am also very keen to pursue more pastoral opportunities within school, as that is an area about which I am very passionate.



Miles Cragg (Year 7) playing the Folk Fiddle Group

Miles, above, as a pupil at Sawston and, to the left, at the 2019 West Road Concert, where, as Music teacher, he performed with pupils.



Emma Cracknell, Drama and English Teacher

Can you give a summary of who you are and when you were a pupil at Sawston Village College?

I am Emma Cracknell. I came to Sawston Village College for the first time in 2001 as a very nervous Year 7 pupil and left in 2006. I then came back in 2012 after graduating to work as a teaching assistant, which I absolutely loved. When I left again to complete my teacher training, I knew that I would love to come back to Sawston to teach.

What was your favourite subject at school and why?

Unsurprisingly, my passion at school was Drama. My Drama teacher was Mr Higgins, who made Drama so enjoyable - even for someone as shy as me! He also made me want to be a Drama teacher. I loved the freedom Drama gave me to express myself. I always felt like it was a safe space in which to be creative. I was even a member of Sawston Youth Drama for a couple of years. I also had a love of English - particularly creative writing.

What is your best memory of being a pupil at Sawston?

My best memory would be performing my GCSE Scripted Performance of 'Be My Baby' in Year 11. I had to pretend to give birth on stage, which put me right out of my comfort zone, but I really enjoyed this performance.

What do you think you gained from having been a pupil at Sawston?

I gained an understanding of what I was really good at, and I will always have such huge respect for those teachers who helped me with subjects I struggled with, such as History - thanks Mr Culpin for getting me that C! I have definitely learnt to be resilient - both as a pupil and as a teacher.

What advice would you give to any current pupils who are interested in teaching as a career?

Go for it! If you have a passion for your subject and like working with children, go into teaching. It is not always easy, but it is very rewarding and fulfilling as a career.

What are your plans for the future?

I certainly want to continue teaching for a while and combine that with travelling. Last year I did my first bit of solo travelling in Thailand so I have got the travel bug now. Who knows where's next...



Emma with a friend in Year 11.

Miles Cragg and Emma Cracknell spoke with Lesley Morgan, Arts Development Manager.



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