

GOOD EVENING GOVERNORS, TRUSTEES, HEADTEACHER  
TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF, PARENTS AND CARERS LADIES AND  
GENTLEMEN, AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, PUPILS AND FORMER  
PUPILS OF BROUGHTON HALL.

WHEN MS CLARKE ASKED ME TO BE THE GUEST SPEAKER FOR THIS  
AWARDS EVENING IT WAS A GREAT PRIVILEGE AND I WAS  
DELIGHTED TO ACCEPT. I WAS A BROUGHTON PUPIL FROM 1971 TO  
1978 SO IT HAS BEEN 38 YEARS SINCE MY LAST AWARDS DAY. MY  
MUM IS HERE TONIGHT AS SHE WAS AT MY FIRST SPEECH NIGHT  
WHEN I WAS GIVEN A STARRING ROLE OF PRESENTING A BOUQUET  
TO THE GUEST SPEAKER, NOT AS A REWARD FOR ANY HARD WORK  
ON MY PART OR RECOGNITION OF ANY GREAT SPORTING  
ACHIEVEMENT BUT BECAUSE THE HONOUR OF PRESENTING THE  
FLOWERS ALWAYS WENT TO THE SHORTEST GIRL IN THE SCHOOL  
WHICH WAS ME – MY SCHOOL UNIFORM, PARTICULARLY THE FULL  
LENGTH MAC, ALWAYS REQUIRED QUITE A LOT OF HEMMING.

AS SOON AS MS CLARKE ASKED ME TO DO THIS IT BROUGHT  
MEMORIES OF BROUGHTON FLOODING BACK .MEMORIES OF  
FABULOUS TEACHERS, MS BURKHILL MY FRENCH TEACHER, SISTER  
MARY COLUMBA MY ENGLISH TEACHER, WHO INSTILLED IN ME A  
LOVE OF BOOKS WHICH IS ONE OF MY GREATEST PLEASURES TO  
THIS DAY, AND MR CARROLL, MY LATIN TEACHER, WHO HAD A

KNOWLEDGE OF CLASSICS WHICH WAS SECOND TO NONE AND BROUGHT TO LIFE ANCIENT ROME IN A WAY WHICH GRIPPED YOU AND MADE YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE.

MEMORIES OF THE BEAUTIFUL PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE SCHOOL – ALTHOUGH THE SCHOOL BUILD HAS CHANGED, ITS SETTING HAS NOT. I AM AN OLD SWAN GIRL AND LIVED IN TENEMENT FLATS ON ST OSWALDS STREET- A GIANT TESCO NOW MARKS THE SPOT (FOR FEAR OF BEING ACCUSED OF FREE ADVERTISING I SHOULD ADD THAT THERE ARE OTHER SUPERMARKETS AVAILABLE).

LIFE AT HOME WAS VERY HAPPY BUT OUR FLAT HAD LIMITED SPACE SO FOR ME GROWING UP IN THIS PLACE EVERY DAY WITH ITS LAKE AND TENNIS COURTS AND SPORTS FIELDS WAS LIKE LIVING IN A DIFFERENT WORLD. SYLVAN BEAUTY INDEED AS THE SCHOOL SONG SAID.

MEMORIES OF SCHOOL TRIPS – TO THE THEATRE AT STRATFORD TO WATCH PERFORMANCE OF SHAKESPEARE PLAYS, A HOCKEY TOUR TO EDINBURGH DURING EDINBURGH FESTIVAL WEEK WHEN THAT CITY COMES ALIVE, TRIPS TO WEMBLEY TO WATCH HOCKEY INTERNATIONALS AND A RETREAT WEEK AT A MONASTERY IN KENT - THE LATTER MEMORABLE FOR THE SPEED AT WHICH WE WERE QUICKLY MOVED OUT BY THE SISTERS FOR A DAY TRIP TO A NEARBY DEER PARK WHEN FOUR COACHLOADS OF SIXTEEN YEAR OLD ITALIAN BOYS TURNED UP TO CELEBRATE AN ITALIAN SAINTS

DAY!

BROUGHTON FOR ME SYMBOLISED OPPORTUNITY – I HAD A VERY SUPPORTIVE FAMILY BUT NOBODY IN MY FAMILY HAD BEEN TO UNIVERSITY BEFORE, NOBODY KNEW HOW YOU APPLIED FOR UNIVERSITY, HOW YOU CHOSE WHICH COURSE YOU SHOULD DO, WHICH UNIVERSITIES WERE BEST FOR WHICH SUBJECTS .NOBODY IN MY FAMILY COULD GUIDE ME IN ANY OF THAT. BUT HERE AT BROUGHTON IT WAS MADE CLEAR TO ME THAT THE OPPORTUNITY OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COULD BE MINE IF I WANTED IT ENOUGH AND WORKED HARD FOR IT.AT BROUGHTON I WAS HELPED TO MAKE THOSE DECISIONS ABOUT WHICH COURSES AND WAS GUIDED THROUGH THE BEWILDERING PROCESS OF UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS.IN THOSE PRE UNIVERSITY DISCUSSIONS I WAS THINKING OF COMBINING STUDY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE WITH A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.BUT THE CONVERSATION WITH MY ENGLISH TEACHER SISTER MARY COLUMBA WENT SOMETHING ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES - ‘THAT’S FINE JEANETTE BUT YOU CAN ALWAYS READ BOOKS AND YOU COULD LEARN A LANGUAGE IN YOUR OWN TIME – I THINK A LAW DEGREE WOULD STRETCH YOU MORE ‘– SHE SAW THINGS IN ME I DIDN’T SEE IN MYSELF BUT, AS YOU WILL KNOW, THAT IS WHAT YOUR TEACHERS DO FOR YOU AND I AM SURE MANY OF YOU ARE PURSUING STUDIES OR AREAS OF WORK WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN GUIDED UPON BY YOUR TEACHERS HERE AT BROUGHTON .IN MY CASE THAT GUIDANCE PUT ME ON A PATH

WHICH BROUGHT ME NEW EXPERIENCES, UNIVERSITY AND LAW COLLEGE, LIVING AWAY FROM HOME, FENDING FOR MYSELF AND ULTIMATELY LED ME TO WHERE I AM TODAY – DOING AN EXTREMELY FULFILLING JOB WORKING FOR THE CITY IN WHICH I WAS BORN AND FOR WHICH I HAVE A GREAT PASSION .I COUNT MYSELF AS PRIVILEGED IN MY WORKING LIFE BUT I WOULDN'T HAVE ANY OF IT WITHOUT HAVING PASSED THROUGH THIS WONDERFUL SCHOOL.AND MET THOSE TEACHERS WHO COACHED AND ENCOURAGED.ALONG THE WAY .THE WORK AND STUDYING HAS SOMETIMES BEEN HARD GOING BUT IT HAS BEEN WORTH IT – I EVEN MET MY HUSBAND IAN AT LAW COLLEGE WHICH WAS AN ADDED BONUS THEN AND REMAINS SO 35 YEARS LATER.

AND I HAVE TO SAY SISTER WAS EVEN PROVED RIGHT ABOUT LEARNING A LANGUAGE IN MY OWN TIME – IT WAS SOME 30 YEARS LATER WHEN I GOT MY ITALIAN LANGUAGE CERTIFICATE FROM A NIGHT SCHOOL AT HOPE UNIVERSITY - ALTHOUGH I HAVE TO SAY IN THAT STUDY PERIOD I DID GET SOME FUNNY LOOKS IN SHOPS IN TOWN WHEN, AS A WOMAN IN MY 40'S, I WOULD PUT A STUDENT DISCOUNT CARD ON THE COUNTER – BUT EDUCATION KNOWS NO AGE LIMITS!

BROUGHTON WAS MY OPPORTUNITY AND NOW IT IS YOURS.THOSE FORMER PUPILS RETURNING AMONGST YOU TONIGHT TO CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESSES CLEARLY TOOK THAT OPPORTUNITY.TO THOSE OF YOU STILL AT BROUGHTON I WOULD

SAY MAKE SURE YOU SIEZE THAT OPPORTUNITY WITH BOTH HANDS  
THE WORLD OUT THERE IS WONDERFUL AND HOPEFULLY HOLDS  
GREAT THINGS FOR YOU BUT IT CAN BE HARD SOMETIMES.YOU MAY  
HAVE HEARD IT SAID THAT SCHOOLDAYS ARE THE BEST DAYS OF  
YOUR LIFE – I DON'T HOLD WITH THAT COMPLETELY AS I WOULD  
WISH FOR YOU ALL A LIFE THAT JUST GETS BETTER AND BETTER AS  
YOU GROW OLDER.BUT SCHOOLDAYS AND COLLEGE AND  
UNIVERSITY DAYS AS A PERIOD OF TIME IN YOUR LIFE ARE PRETTY  
SPECIAL AND DO YOU KNOW WHY ? – BECAUSE YOU ARE  
SURROUNDED BY PEOPLE WHO JUST WANT THE BEST FOR EACH  
AND EVERY ONE OF YOU – THEY ARE ALL ON YOUR SIDE.  
WHATEVER YOUR HOPES, DREAMS, AMBITIONS THEY WANT THEM  
FOR YOU AS MUCH AS YOU WANT THEM FOR YOUSELF .I CAME IN TO  
SCHOOL TO CHAT WITH MS CLARKE AND SOME OF HER STAFF  
RECENTLY AND I WAS BLOWN AWAY BY THE ENERGY, THE  
COMMITMENT AND THE CARE THAT THEY HAVE FOR EVERY PUPIL.  
THIS SCHOOL IS OBVIOUSLY IN VERY GOOD HANDS.  
THE CARING ETHOS IN THE SCHOOL IS STILL VERY MUCH IN  
EVIDENCE AS IT WAS IN MY TIME HERE.TEACHERS CARED  
FOR US, WE CARED FOR EACH OTHER AND WE CARED FOR THE  
WIDER COMMUNITY – FUND RAISING AND VOLUNTEERING WAS A KEY  
PART OF SCHOOL LIFE. JUST BEING IN SCHOOL FOR A MORNING  
RECENTLY AND SEEING HOW PEOPLE GREETED EACH OTHER,  
JOKED WITH EACH OTHER AND GENERALLY INTERACTED, AND  
LOOKING AT DISPLAYS ON THE WALL SHOWING THE COMMITMENTS

YOU HAVE MADE TO CHARITABLE CAUSES SHOWED ME THAT THE CONCERN AND SUPPORT FOR EACH OTHER AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY IS VERY MUCH STILL ALIVE AND WELL IN THIS SCHOOL.

SOME THINGS WERE DIFFERENT THOUGH IN MY WALK AROUND WITH MS CLARKE .FIRSTLY WE WALKED ALONG THE ONLY SURVIVING CLASSROOM CORRIDOR FROM MY YEARS AT BROUGHTON AND I WAS FOUR INCHES TALLER THAN I HAD EVER BEEN IN MY TIME HERE – THAT IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN 38 YEARS LATER, AS A VISITOR YOU FINALLY GET TO WEAR HEELS IN SCHOOL AS OPPOSED TO REGULATION FLAT INDOOR SANDALS. SECONDLY, ON THE BASIS THAT IN MY TIME AT BROUGHTON THE SISTERS REFUSED TO LET THE BROUGHTON GIRLS STAND AT THE SAME BUS STOP AS THE BOYS FROM THE SCHOOL NEXT DOOR, I AM NOT QUITE SURE WHAT THEY WOULD MAKE OF THE IDEA OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN A SHARED SIXTH FORM BUT I KNOW THEY WOULD BE IMPRESSED BY HOW WELL IT IS WORKING.

ONE OPPORTUNITY THAT YOU HAVE THAT I DIDN'T IS THE TIME AT WHICH YOU ARE GROWING UP IN THIS FABULOUS CITY. IT IS MORE VIBRANT THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN .THERE IS SO MUCH TO SEE AND DO AND WITH THAT COME CHANCES FOR YOU. LIFE EXPERIENCES AND CHANCES OF EMPLOYMENT IN SO MANY DIFFERENT SECTORS – ARTS AND CULTURE, SCIENCE, RETAIL, TOURISM, I.T, HEALTH

CARE AND, DARE I SAY IT TODAY, SPORT, ALTHOUGH SOME OF YOU IN THE ROOM MAY NOT WANT TO DWELL ON SPORT AFTER LASTS NIGHTS RESULT – AS SOMEBODY WHO WAS GIVEN SPECIAL LEAVE FROM SCHOOL TO GO TO ROME TO WATCH LIVERPOOL IN THE 1977 EUROPEAN CUP FINAL I COULDN'T POSSIBLY COMMENT ! YOU ALL HAVE DIFFERENT TALENTS AND DIFFERENT INTERESTS BUT THIS EXCITING AND GROWING CITY OF LIVERPOOL HAS SOMETHING TO OFFER YOU. EVEN IF LIFE TAKES YOU AWAY FROM THE CITY EVENTUALLY, EMBRACE ALL THAT IT HAS WHILE YOU ARE HERE AND TAKE THAT WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO STAY IN THE CITY AS I HAVE, OR RETURN TO THE CITY AFTER A SPELL ELSEWHERE, MAKE SURE YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EVERYTHING IT HAS TO OFFER AND MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIFE OF THE CITY.

SO YOU ARE IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME IN TERMS OF THE SCHOOL YOU ARE BEING TAUGHT IN, OR WERE BEING TAUGHT IN UNTIL RECENTLY, AND THE CITY THAT YOU ARE LIVING IN, BUT HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE THAT GREAT START AND USE IT TO YOUR BEST ADVANTAGE?

AS I MENTIONED YOU WILL ALL HAVE DIFFERENT INTERESTS, DIFFERENT SKILLS AND DIFFERENT TALENTS .MY MUM AND MY HUSBAND ARE BOTH HERE TONIGHT AND WILL TELL YOU THAT I AM NOT THE WORLDS MOST PRACTICAL OR CREATVE INDIVIDUAL.

ACTUALLY THAT WAS PROVED AT A VERY EARLY STAGE OF MY EDUCATION IN BROUGHTON .AT THAT TIME THE CLASS WOULD BE SPLIT IN HALF FOR WHAT WAS THEN CALLED DOMESTIC SCIENCE – BASICALLY LOOKING AT COOKING AND NUTRITION.ONE HALF WOULD DO THEORY, FOR EXAMPLE WHAT FOODS PROVIDED WHICH VITAMINS, WHILST THE OTHER HALF WOULD BE DOING PRACTICAL – ACTUALLY COOKING SOMETHING .HALFWAY THROUGH THE YEAR YOU WOULD CHANGE OVER.I STARTED IN THEORY AND AT THE CHRISTMAS TESTS WAS FLYING HIGH AT TOP OF THE CLASS WITH MY EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT VITAMINS WERE IN WHICH FOODS AND WHY MILK WAS GOOD FOR YOU - THEN CAME THE SPRING TERM AND I SWAPPED INTO THE PRACTICAL HALF OF THE CLASS AND THEN CAME THE DREADED COOKING OF SCONES – IN MY WORLD GREATER THAN ANY CHALLENGE THERE HAS EVER BEEN ON THE GREAT BRITISH BAKE OFF! SADLY I REALLY WASN'T UP TO THAT CHALLENGE AND EVEN MY VERY SUPPORTIVE FAMILY COULDN'T MANAGE TO EAT MY SAD OFFERINGS BROUGHT HOME EVERY WEEK IN THE BISCUIT TIN EARMARKED FOR COOKERY CLASS. MY SUMMER REPORT SAW ME BOTTOM OF MY COOKERY CLASS AND WAS THE PERFECT ILLUSTRATION OF HOW TALENTS CAN DIFFER.SO IF YOU ARE MORE OF THE PRACTICAL CREATIVE PERSON THAN THE ACADEMIC THEN PURSUE THAT CREATIVITY (AND, FOR SOME OF YOU, YOUR MUSICAL CREATIVITY WAS VERY EVIDENT IN THE WONDERFUL MUSIC INTERLUDES WE HAVE HEARD THIS EVENING) LEARNING LOOKS DIFFERENT FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE – THAT'S WHY



I AM A LAWYER AND I AM NOT MARY BERRY!

BUT SERIOUSLY WHATEVER YOUR STRENGTHS, AND YOU ALL HAVE THEM, WHILE YOU ARE HERE IN THIS INCREDIBLY SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT, AND WITH SO MUCH HELP AT HAND, WORK HARD TO DEVELOP THEM TO THE FULLEST EXTENT WHATEVER THEY MAY BE.

IN BROUGHTON, AND IN THE WIDER WORLD BEYOND BROUGHTON, BE CONFIDENT IN YOURSELF AND YOUR WORTH AND NEVER BE AFRAID OR EMBARRASSED TO SAY YOU ARE GOOD AT SOMETHING OR THAT YOU HAVE DONE SOMETHING REALLY WELL .TAKE A REAL PRIDE IN YOUR SUCCESSES BOTH AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A SCHOOL.YOU WORK HARD FOR YOU SUCCESSES SO CELEBRATE THEM.

SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR OPPORTUNITIES.BE KIND TO EACH OTHER .TEENAGE YEARS CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR MANY REASONS, NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF SOME OF THE PRESSURE YOU FACE, SURROUNDED BY MEDIA IMAGES OF WHAT BEING YOUNG AND POPULAR SHOULD LOOK LIKE.DONT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT BEING THE CLEVEREST, THE MOST FASHIONABLE, THE MOST POPULAR – THE PEOPLE WHO WILL MAKE THE BEST WORK COLLEAGUES, FRIENDS AND EVEN PARTNERS IN THE FUTURE WILL BE THOSE WHO VALUE YOU FOR YOUR MORE IMPORTANT QUALITIES – YOUR KINDNESS, YOUR HUMOUR, YOUR HONESTY AND YOUR WARMTH.

I TALKED EARLIER ABOUT AWARENESS AND CONCERN FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY AROUND YOU AND HOW THAT WAS ALWAYS ENCOURAGED AT BROUGHTON HALL AND STILL IS. TAKE THAT CONCERN WITH YOU OUT BEYOND YOUR TIME AT BROUGHTON HALL. MY JOB AS THE SENIOR LAWYER AT LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL IS INTELLECTUALLY VERY REWARDING – SISTER MARY COLUMBA WOULD BE PLEASED THAT IT CERTAINLY ‘STRETCHES MY BRAIN’ TO USE HER PHRASE AGAIN - ALTHOUGH SOME DAYS A LITTLE LESS STRETCHING WOULD BE WELCOME – BUT THE BEST PART OF MY JOB FOR ME IS THAT EVERYTHING I DO IS HOPEFULLY GOING TO RESULT IN SOMETHING POSITIVE FOR THE PEOPLE OF LIVERPOOL AND FOR THE CITY ITSELF. ALWAYS BE MINDFUL OF THE CONTRIBUTION YOU ARE MAKING TO THE WIDER SOCIETY .JUST BECAUSE YOUR JOB MAY NOT BE THE MOST SENIOR IN THE ORGANISATION DOESN'T MEAN YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS LESS VALUABLE. NEITHER MYSELF NOR MY SENIOR COLLEAGUES AT THE CITY COUNCIL CAN PRESENT A CASE IN COURT FOR THE CITY COUNCIL OR REPRESENT THE CITY COUNCIL AT MEETINGS WITH CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WITHOUT FANTASTIC ADMINSTRATIVE WORK DONE BACK AT THE OFFICE BY A TEAM WHO MAKE SURE THAT WE HAVE ALL THE RIGHT PAPERS IN ALL THE RIGHT ORDER FOR THE RIGHT MEETING OR COURT HEARING. MANY MEMBERS OF THAT TEAM ARE PEOPLE WHO JOINED THE CITY COUNCIL STRAIGHT OUT OF SCHOOL AND, WHEN

THEY HELP US PREPARE FOR THAT COURT CASE OR MEETING,  
THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE CITY OF LIVERPOOL AND ITS PEOPLE  
IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS MINE AS CITY SOLICITOR .SO  
REMEMBER , WHEREVER YOU START YOUR WORKING LIFE IN  
WHATEVER ORGANISATION AND AT WHATEVER LEVEL, YOUR PART  
IN IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKING THE WHOLE THING WORK – THEY  
CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU.

THE LAST THING I WOULD SAY TO YOU ABOUT MAKING THE MOST OF  
YOUR OPPORTUNITIES IS TO BE PUSHY – IN THE NICEST POSSIBLE  
WAY OF COURSE IN KEEPING WITH GOOD BROUGHTON MANNERS .IF  
YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A CERTAIN AREA OF WORK OR IN A  
CERTAIN INDUSTRY OR SECTOR THEN MAKE CONTACT AND ASK  
ABOUT WORK EXPERIENCE OR WORK SHADOWING ONE OF THEIR  
EMPLOYEES.IF THERE IS SOMEBODY WHOSE FIELD OF WORK  
INTERESTS OR INSPIRES YOU THEN SEE IF THEY CAN SPARE YOU A  
FEW MINUTES OF THEIR TIME TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THEIR  
CAREER PATH AND HOW THEY GOT TO WHERE THEY ARE – SEEK  
OUT SOME TIPS FROM THOSE WHO HAVE DONE IT ALREADY.THEY  
CAN ONLY SAY NO BUT IN MY EXPERIENCE MOST PEOPLE WILL SAY  
YES – ENTHUSIASM IS A VERY ATTRACTIVE TRAIT IN A POTENTIAL  
STUDENT OR EMPLOYEE .ALSO - THE OTHER WAY AROUND - HAVING  
ENTHUSIASM FOR YOUR JOB CERTAINLY MAKES THE WORLD OF  
WORK MORE PLEASURABLE SO TRY AND MAKE THOSE INROADS  
EARLY INTO THE AREAS THAT INTEREST YOU.

SO THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE FOR EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU AND WITH HARD WORK AND ENTHUSIASM I KNOW YOU WILL ALL MAKE THE MOST OF THEM

CAN I THANK YOU ALL AGAIN FOR THIS WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY WHICH YOU HAVE GIVEN TO ME TO COME BACK TO BROUGHTON HALL TO RELIVE MY TIME HERE AND TO BE PART OF TONIGHTS CELEBRATION OF YOUR SUCCESSES.

I WISH YOU ALL, PUPILS AND FORMER PUPILS, VERY HAPPY AND FULFILLED LIVES IN AND BEYOND BROUGHTON HALL AND I WISH ALL OF YOU HERE THIS EVENING, AND YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES, A VERY HAPPY AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS.

THANK YOU