

Clock Tower Ascent



Arriving at the 2018 reunion, I was thrilled to hear that there was the chance to take a trip up the clock tower before lunch.

Nowadays it has a very sturdy ladder going up to the tower, which is usually locked! The last time I was up there was in the early 70s and access was via an old long rickety wooden ladder and a small bob-hole. Of course it was out of bounds in those days but a few of us quietly went up one dinner-time and wrote our names, in time-honoured tradition.

Would my name still be there, along with my father's (Jack Ingham) nearly 50 years later? This time, we went up three at a time and the current clock winder (The Site Manager) was up there to talk to us about the clock. The tower was still dusty and, yes, covered with names of pupils, who one way or another had managed to get up there. Some past pupils were of course 'legal entries', as they had the magnificent role of winding the clock once a week, apparently on a Friday. My brother Mark was such a person and he used to say that rewinding it without stopping for a rest was not easy.

One new addition took my eye. In 2014, on the school's 150th anniversary since opening in 1864, a time capsule had been buried in the tower wall. Wonder what they put in it.

Well, I looked and looked and, yes, suddenly my name emerged on the inside at the bottom of the wooden winding door covers, alongside both my brother's AND my eldest daughter's (Sarah Frank née Ingham). Now she had never told me that she had been up there ...

JOHN INGHAM
(1964 - 1971)

