

35 YEARS

NEWSLETTER



The Griffin
Community Trust

Celebrating
35 Years!



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35 Years

Flat Crawl



An Interview with Dr White

What were you doing at the time griffin was started?

I was a 3rd year medical student at the (then) London Hospital Medical School when Griffin started; I was the Welfare Officer (previously known as the Housing Officer for the Clubs Union).

What inspired you to start this project?

Peter Mills, a cardiologist and the then Senior President of the Clubs Union, and Simon Lee, a fellow medical student and now a plastic surgeon in Bristol were both instrumental in helping take the project forward. We must not forget the role of the late Lord David Westbury and Lady Ursula Westbury in embracing the project and helping us fund raise – without them it would never have happened. We must also thank the Tudor Trust, a well established charity, for gifting us our first substantial donation which help us on our way.

What challenges did you face?

The major challenges were convincing people that it was a viable idea (most people thought that it would never happen and that we were 'mad' to pursue it!!) and then raising the money to take the project forward.

Is there anyone in particular who was instrumental in helping to set up Griffin?

I was sitting in the Clubs Union office one day in 1988 chatting to the Student President, Charlie Siderfin, who is a very enthusiastic, charismatic person (now a GP on the Orkney Islands). He suggested that, in order to help students find accommodation in East London, that we asked the local council for a derelict block of flats and that we then raised the money to restore and decorate; and that we shared the building with older people from the local community – the idea was Charlie's, not mine!

An Interview with Dr White

Best/funniest memory of Griffin?

Gosh – there are a few. Best ones: Princess Royal coming to open the building

in 1996, closely followed by our 25 anniversary dinner at Drapers' Hall in 2013

– it was a beautiful venue and a lovely evening. Funniest: Lady Westbury's 'F**ked up chicken' that she regularly served us at yearly get-togethers at her home (her words, not mind!).

How do you think Griffin has changed/evolved over the last 35yrs?

I think that when we started we did not really look beyond the first 5 years. We thought that we were doing older people a 'favour.' In reality, there is a symbiotic relationship between students and older people, with the students (and the committee) having just as much to learn and gain from the life experience of the older Shaftesbury residents, as the older residents gain in friendship and fun that the students and events that we provide

How do you think Griffin will change in the next 5-10yrs?

To be honest, I'm not sure – I hope that our ethos will stay true to our founding principles: the bringing together of two generations in mutual friendship and shared experiences

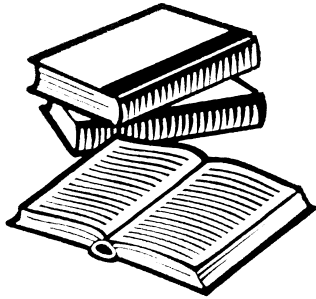
How do you see loneliness and the fight against it in the future?

In many ways, loneliness may get worse – with the digital age, we too often depend on the internet and social media to communicate and as we get older potentially miss out on the opportunity to communicate in person and enjoy close company. Hopefully Griffin has an ongoing role in alleviating the isolation this may cause, and continue to promote friendship and community

Closing comments

It has been enormous fun, as well as a lot of hard work, to be involved with Griffin over the last 35 years, but the key is that we have all gained so much and it has been a privilege to walk along side with so many students, colleagues and older people who have enjoyed our project, enriching all of our lives in so many ways.

Tales From Alumni



Kathryn Price

Now a Geriatric SPR. Was at Griffin 9 years ago.

What does griffin mean to you and what did you gain?

“Really lovely memories of a community at university. Friends for life. Inspiration for career in geriatrics. So much experience of real life in east London and a community of friends. Connections with the local community.”

Why are you now a trustee?

“Wanted to continue to be part of your community!”

Jamie Henderson

Currently an F1 up North. At Griffin for 5 years.

What does griffin mean to you?

“Community, support and the formation of friendships with lots of different people across a gap in generations.”

Advice to younger years at griffin?

“Embrace the opportunities and engage with events. Don't be afraid to speak up at committee meetings if attending. You have an important viewpoint.”

Arief Gunawan

Now a Consultant Haematologist. Was at Griffin 15 Years ago

What does griffin mean to you?

“Griffin will always be a home away from home for me. Furthermore, the interaction that I had with the residents really helped me to gain historical perspective of East London”

Why are you now a trustee and what has it added to your experience?

“I enjoy the interaction that I have with the current residents and students. It helps to maintain my connection with the College and Poplar.”



35 Years



Carola Bigogno

Currently an F1 at Barts Trust. At griffin for 3 years.

~

What are your takeaways from your time at griffin?

“Some of the best memories - COVID Christmas and New Years was a special time, as few of us were not able to travel back home because of the lockdowns, but Griffin is our second family and we had the best celebrations. Christmas dinners, afternoon teas and really all events for the residents, it was just wonderful getting to know them, learning about their lives and families and bringing a smile to their faces. Communal lectures and OSCE power hours, we helped each others achieve our very best and our dreams. Flat crawls, corridor parties, end of year party, because we did not just live and study together, we always enjoyed each others company.”

Advice to younger years at griffin?

“Live Griffin to 200%, get involved in everything that it offers and don't be shy! Learn from residents, have fun with the other students and you'll become a better person and professional.”

Thomas Yau

Currently an F1 in East London. At Griffin for 3 years.

What does griffin mean to you and what are your takeaways?

“Best community in East London! Very meaningful and life long friendships with other locals of Tower Hamlet and students”

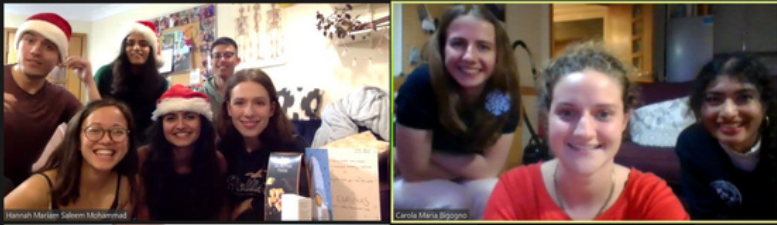
Advice to younger years at griffin?

“Engage with the other griffin students to build a sociable tight knit community. It makes Griffin activities more fun and it'll really shine through! The residents will definitely appreciate this contagious energy too!”

Tales From
Alumni

35 Years

Tales From Alumni



Laura Zagarella

Currently an F1 doctor. At Griffin for 2 years.

What does griffin mean to you?

“Griffin was a beautiful community and I’m so grateful I got to be a part of it. Griffin means a lovely group of people who care about each other and the local community!”

What are your takeaways?

“That there is a lot to gain and learn from our older generation and that we should aim to be as tough as they are!”

Advice to younger years at griffin?

“Lean on your fellow Griffin students and help each other through your studies. You’ll never get to live so close to your friends again!”

Angela Chau

Currently Knitting, cooking (and eating), learning to drive and working in the NHS. At griffin for 2 years.

What are your takeaways from your time at griffin?

“Time spent with people is always time well spent”

Advice to younger years at griffin?

“There’s always time for meeting up with griffin neighbours. Invites to dinner/cup of tea seem simple but build fond memories.”

Jed Ashman

Currently an F1 in the Midlands. At Griffin for 3 years.

What does griffin mean to you?

“A community of friends and an opportunity that was incredibly supportive for me.”

Advice to younger years at griffin?

“Get stuck in. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know and befriend people from all walks of life. You get out as much as you put in! Keep the community thriving so that it continues to have a positive impact on us all!”



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Tales From Alumni



In Autumn's Grip - Flat 2

In autumn's grip, the leaves take flight,
A riot of colors, oh, what a sight!
They flutter down, in a joyful dance,
Creating a leafy, crunchy romance.

The squirrels scurry, in a nutty quest,
Storing acorns away, for their winter's rest.
The pumpkins grin with toothy grins,
As if they've all had too much pumpkin spice sins.

The sun sets early, the nights grow cold,
But we wrap up warm, both young and old.
In cozy sweaters and scarves so bright,
We sip on cider, by the firelight.

So embrace the season, don't be a gloom,
For autumn's here, with its pumpkin perfume.
It's a time of harvest, and laughter's call,
In this funny, chilly, leafy fall!

35 Years

35 year anniversary word search

S	B	T	N	E	V	E	D	O	C	T	O	R	D
N	R	O	N	L	F	L	S	U	Y	O	V	O	G
N	W	N	Y	D	F	F	H	Y	N	C	R	C	T
N	E	O	N	T	C	B	A	R	F	O	N	E	A
N	S	S	G	U	H	C	F	A	I	M	B	L	C
M	T	Y	R	Y	F	V	T	S	Y	M	M	E	I
U	B	Y	I	D	R	T	S	R	T	U	O	B	T
T	U	A	F	E	C	O	B	E	I	N	C	R	O
U	R	B	F	N	S	Y	U	V	R	I	R	A	A
A	Y	A	I	T	O	N	R	I	A	T	I	T	U
M	W	R	N	I	C	B	Y	N	H	Y	O	E	H
Y	U	T	D	S	B	E	T	N	C	G	U	I	L
C	R	S	N	T	E	E	M	A	R	S	L	F	O
I	B	T	N	O	I	S	S	A	P	M	O	C	P

COMPASSION
GRIFFIN
ANNIVERSARY
CHARITY
EVENT
SHAFTSBURY
AUTUMN
DOCTOR
TOYNBEE
COMMUNITY
DENTIST
BARTS
FUN
WESTBURY
CELEBRATE

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/6300397/>

Big Thank you to Dr White and the alumni who took part!