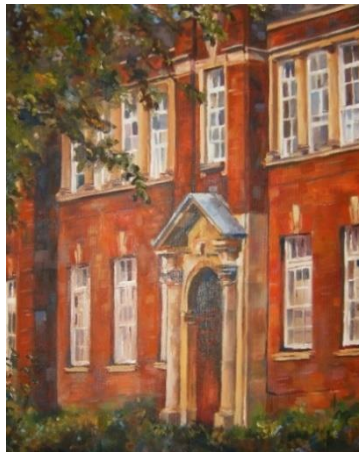




Friday 15th January 2021 - Community Assembly

'Letter to my younger self'



Last year I was fortunate to be gifted a book by some School colleagues titled, *'Letter to my younger self – 100 inspiring people on the moments that shaped their lives'*, devised and edited by Jane Graham. The book is dedicated to all the people who have ever sold or bought the 'The Big Issue'. A wide range of figures, from academia, culture & entertainment, sport, etc. provide their letters, which are themed: ambition, creativity, self-belief, inspiration, family, friendship, tenacity, courage, fate, ageing, hindsight, fulfilment and love.

One of the letters which stood out for me was written by Dionne Warwick, the American singer, actress, television host, and former Goodwill Ambassador for the Food and Agriculture Organisation. She writes to her younger self:

I had big plans when I was 16. I was going to be a prima ballerina, a concert pianist, a teacher or a photographer, and I still think any of those things could have given me as much pleasure as singing. But when I tore the ligaments in my foot and couldn't stand on my toes anymore, I knew I couldn't be a ballerina. So, I changed my focus from my toes to my throat...I had a very strong family around me, and family is the anchor of anybody's being. One of the biggest things that young Dionne will have to learn is the art of making decisions, and much of that will come from the environment she's been brought up in...When I was 16 I always wanted to be 40. There was always something very magical about that number for me...and now that I'm 70 I feel the same way!

I warm to the big dreams at the heart of this account and how she was able to navigate through struggles, benefitting from key things which centred her life. If you are looking for some heart-warming and inspiring 'letters', I thoroughly recommend this book as a fine read.

Mr Lawlor