

THE SCOOP

CONNECTING ALUMNI

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TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Ms. Wykes – Biology Legend

Ms. Wykes is the kind of teacher who leaves a lasting impression on everyone she meets. In her early years, she affectionately referred to her students as "Pixies". Though more recently, she has begun calling them her "little ones." Continued on page 6.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Alumni Meetup

11 April 2026

We're planning an alumni meetup in connection with the annual International Fair
More information coming soon.



New Year. New Moments. Same Inspiring Alumni Community.

2025 was a year full of visits to CIS, stories, successes, and shared memories! Find the latest scoop on the following pages!

Welcome to the Scoop

We're grateful to our alumni for sharing their stories, achievements, and experiences over the past year. This newsletter brings you stories from the past and present. We hope it helps you stay connected to a place that has been part of your journey.

Happy reading!
Suzanne, Editor & Lan, Director of
Communications



Behind the success of CIS: Our community pioneers

1963



In 1962, a group of 12 students were offered a high school correspondence course with the University of Nebraska. The course was arranged by Mrs Mary-Lou Gallagher who was employed at the US Embassy. She was contacted by a handful of expat parents seeking to provide their children with an English-language education while remaining in Copenhagen with their families.

In 1963, the parents rented a room at *Bagsværd Kostskole og Gymnasium*. One teacher was hired to supervise the program. No student was doing the same subject at one time. Students received their assignment, did it, sent it off, and waited three months to get the graded work back from Nebraska.

1964



Mrs. Charlotte Metz is honored in the 1976 Yearbook by Headmaster, Charles Gellar, "*I am extremely pleased that this yearbook has been dedicated to Mrs. Metz, teacher, counsellor and friend.*"

It is easy to think that institutions have a life of their own, separate from the individuals which have created and continued them. They dont. Whatever reputation CIS has earned for its dedication to ideals, education, and concern for human beings, we owe to Mrs. Metz.

For 13 years she has bravely borne the problems, concerns, and tears of successive waves of young people on their turbulent way from youth to adulthood with enviable equanimity, understanding, patience and warmth. She has made her time, our time; her life, our life. What more can anyone ask of anyone?" - Charles Gellar

1965



Godfrey Sullivan, was an Irish teacher of History at the United Nations International School in New York before accepting the post of Principal at Copenhagen International High School (CIHS) in July 1965.

In August, the school was housed in the newly constructed JFK School in Gladsaxe. The building wasn't quite finished, so students (and teachers) had to climb up and down rickety ladders to get to their classroom.

The school name was changed to CIS in 1968 to avoid confusion with the Danish "højskole"). Godfrey, who unfortunately passed away in 1970, was married to Inez Sullivan who became Principal of CIJS in 1973. They had a daughter Maeve who attended CIS and graduated in 1989.

John Therman was the first student to receive an American High School Diploma.



The journey of CIS Student Council



1972



1975



1985



2025

Q & A with Bill Hawkins, Student Council President 1972 and Shirin Bjerrum-Bohr, Student Council President 2025

The evolution of student councils from the 1970s to today mirrors broader shifts in society, culture, and technology. Can you share your thoughts on your time as President of the Student Council?

Bill: I have the advantage of seeing Shirin's description of the modern version of CIS student government. During my two years on council in the early 1970s, the first major difference centers on communication. Here I am answering questions by email, from the far side of another continent. In my years, of course there was no email, internet, cell phones, or even fax technology. Almost all of my communication was in person.

The second major difference has to do with focus. We were not involved in politics as a council, so no. CIS had recently moved into a new, temporary building as guests of the Danish Høje Gladsaxe Gymnasium. There remained logistical and administrative issues to work out with our host school, such as use of athletic fields and equipment, sharing responsibility for hosting school parties, and the like.



Shirin: Today the student council aims at extending into global issues such as diversity and inclusion. One of the ways I have worked towards this as a student council co-president was through initiatives such as hosting a 'Worldly Wednesday'. Here we did a whole secondary interactive presentation, where we presented lots of different nationalities and cultures, to showcase our diverse CIS community. Furthermore, we have plans to work with the CIS counsellors to create a 'kindness week', emphasizing mental health awareness and building community.

With new emerging technology and social media, the Student Council has also taken an active part in this, with our social media account, where we showcase fun, engaging student-oriented videos as a way to connect with the student body and create a stronger sense of community and connection. These new emerging plans of the student council strongly mirror the border shifts in society, culture, and technology, and show how we have adapted the student council to easily fit into the lifestyle of many of our students.

"We weren't leading political or social crusades in those days, we were helping fellow students navigate a new and uncertain world." Bill Hawkins

Bill, do you think you had an impact on some issues during your time as Student Council President?

Bill: Without a doubt. As I said earlier, we weren't leading political or social crusades in those days, we were helping fellow students navigate a new and uncertain world. For instance, for the American students among us, the Vietnam war was in full swing, and extremely unpopular in Denmark, on Danish TV and Swedish TV (which was also available). Foreign Service dependents are expected to remain strictly neutral, so the very idea of political involvement would have been a non-starter.

At the same time, the war generated very strong backlash from other students, staff, and it seemed virtually every Dane I met in school and outside of school. That presented its own stresses for our students, some of whom were military dependents. We had a peer. Outselling the role to play, and I believed it helped.

Shirin, what impact does the Student Council hope to make during your time as President?

Shirin: I want people to look back at the 2025 student council term as one that brought the whole secondary together, if that's through our engaging social media presence, our proms, after-school events, or our assemblies and parades.



Honoring our anniversary classes in 2026



Milestone Anniversaries

1976, 1986, 1996, 2001,
2006, 2016

Save the date:

Saturday, 11 April 2026

Alumni are invited to the International Fair. More details soon!



Reunions in Copenhagen, 2025



Class of 1995



Class of 2005

Our heartfelt thanks to the following alumni who have kept the alumni community thriving:

Helen Gallagher (Class of 1972)
Eric Hoppe (Class of 1994)
Courtney Moore (Class of 1995)
Josh Meyer and Petteri Pertola (Class of 2003)
Max Andersen and Anne Kolker (Class of 2005)
Alexsi Pertola, (Class of 2005)
Jonas Smith (Class 2022)



Looking back

Antti Rantanen - Class of 1997



"Looking back, CIS was transformative not just academically but personally. The teachers never saw me as a lost cause; they saw me as I was and it was at CIS that I first began to genuinely care about learning. My English teacher, Mr. Pierce, introduced me to the Beat writers completely outside the IB curriculum and they sparked my love of reading.

Dr. Bone somehow made physics fascinating, even though I struggled with tests and the standard ways schools measure understanding. met me there. For that, I'll always be grateful. CIS taught me that being different isn't something to overcome—it's something to celebrate."

In 2024, Antti was diagnosed severe ADHD, Level 1 autism, and dyslexia. The results explained everything and today, Antti has built a career around anticipating transformation and guiding companies through it. He has helped build seven companies and now focus on helping manufacturers integrate AI into their core operations. Thank you, Antti for sharing your story.

Get involved!

Looking to inspire the next generation? Join a class via Zoom as a guest speaker. Contact alumni@cis.dk



Alumni Spotlight

Britt Baillie, Class of 2000

MPhil and PhD in Heritage Studies from the Department of Archaeology

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Professor Britt Baillie, Class of 2000, for kindly dedicating her time to support our Grade 5 students on their project, **"Using Light Drones at Archaeological Dig Sites to Support PTSD Treatment in War Veterans."**



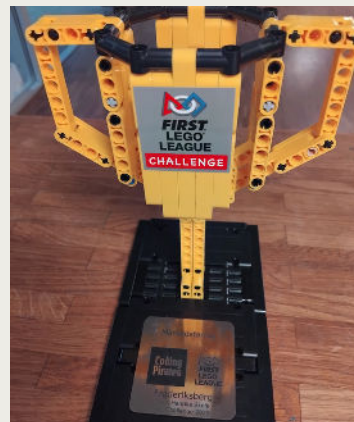
Professor Baillie and the CIS Hawks

Professor Baillie recently offered her guidance to support the CIS Hawks Team as they prepared for the FIRST Lego League event in Frederiksberg. Her time and kindness were deeply appreciated. The team later qualified for the national round in Odense on 29 November 2025, an achievement they are certain would not have been possible without her support.

Britt met the team at the finals and provided feedback and suggestions on their innovation project. She also asked whether they would be willing to share their story with the Veterans she works with and if they would be interested in giving a presentation to them in the New Year. Both plans are now underway, with the team preparing for a preliminary presentation by the HAWKS scheduled for February 2026.

Informally, Britt shared the news with the Veterans she works most closely with. They were deeply moved that the Hawks had considered them and their needs, and they are eager to learn more about the project.

The wider initiative is overseen by the Head of Department, Minos Debat, who was delighted to hear that the contest had inspired the next generation. He is also a member of the European Archaeological Association's Well-Being Council, so we may want to explore opportunities to present the Hawks' work to that group as well.



The CIS FIRST Lego League team won the Marketing Award

Get involved!

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Teacher Spotlight

Ms. Wykes – Biology Legend



Ms. Wykes is the kind of teacher who leaves a lasting impression on everyone she meets. In her early years, she affectionately referred to her students as "Pixies," though more recently, she has begun calling them her "little ones."

For all who have had the privilege of learning from her, Ms. Wykes is more than just a science teacher, she is a constant source of encouragement and has guided countless exciting student trips, from Team Peru adventures to biology excursions to Mexico.

Ms. Wykes has posed the following questions. Email alumni@cis.dk if this is you!

- Were you involved with Goldsworthy Art at Tisvilde?
- Did you play guitar/sing a song/make a poem or rap to explain blood circulation and the heart in bio?
- Did you see chameleons, boas and lemurs in Madagascar?
- Did you sample for invertebrates in the sea/river or quadrat sample on the dunes during a bio field trip?
- Were you involved in the trashion show?



CIS Highlights

Memorable events and experiences that define our school

Halloween Fest

Our PTA Halloween Fest was a smashing success once again! From spooky to spectacular, students and parents alike brought their A-game with jaw-dropping costumes. What started in 1995 on a quiet Charlottenlund street, back when Halloween was still a novelty in Denmark, has grown into a much-anticipated community highlight.

Thanks to Jill Milnor (PTA), who first encouraged neighbors to transform their homes into treat-filled havens, the event quickly captured everyone's imagination. By 1998, the celebration had outgrown the street and moved to the school, where it continues to delight families every year with fun, frights, and unforgettable memories.



Labyrinth Returns

Labyrinth, our school's literary magazine, got its start in the mid 1970s with Barbara Sapin, our sole English teacher back then. After she left, Labyrinth missed a few years, but when my wife Britta and I joined the school in 1982, we resurrected it, establishing writing contests in fiction, poetry, and essay, with cash prizes for the best three in each category.

Our art teachers Elspeth Waddington and then Bob Carignan set up similar awards for graphic art. Every spring, all the awards were given out at an Arts Ceremony, at the close of which each student got a free copy of Labyrinth. All the entries were printed in the magazine.

There was a fair amount of work involved not only for us, but also for the students on the Labyrinth Committee, and of course for the contributing writers, poets and graphic artists themselves. But it was a labour of love, and it became one of the best things we did as a school.

Forty years later, I still get letters from students telling me that winning one of the contest made them believe in themselves, telling me they still give their Labyrinths pride of place on their living room bookshelves.

--- Bheka Pierce

Short stories winner 2025:
Nova Terra by Bradley Williams

Labyrinth cover design winner:
Millie McNulty

Model United Nations

Copenhagen International School was proud to host its first-ever COPMUN conference in 2025, a Model United Nations event for high school students.

Held on the 26th of September, the conference brought together delegates from schools across Denmark for a full day of diplomacy and debate, embodying the spirit of Model United Nations, uniting students "in bringing peace to the world, one debate at a time."

Six students from grades 10-12 attended ASMMUN, the Model UN conference hosted by the American School of Milan. This year, delegates represented Austria, Brazil and Somalia in varied committees such as Security Council, UNODC and the Council of Refugees.

Our students chaired the Economic and Social Council and two CIS'ers were on the Press Team.



What's buzzing in the upcoming Scoop!



"If I had to name one accomplishment I'm most proud of, it would be creating daily opportunities for students to experience success and to believe in their own potential."

Ms. Jo Gregersen, Primary

- Save the date: Alumni reunion 11/04/26
- Teacher Spotlights
Ms. Jo Gregersen
Ms. Toni Heisterberg
Mr. David Ferguson
- Yearbook over time: A look inside the minds of 1998 and 2025 editors
- The Hawks and theatre performances over time



"Being active is a life skill and finding something you feel passionate about is important. We need to remember the mind and the body are not separate, what affects one affects the other."

Ms. Toni Heisterberg, P.E.



**SEASON GREETINGS
FROM ALL AT CIS!
Vi ses i 2026!**

