



REGS OLD BOYS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE OLD WYCOMBIENSIANS' CLUB

Thirteenth Issue

January 2009



OLD WYCOMBIENSIANS' CLUB

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OLD WYCOMBIENSIANS' ANNUAL DINNER 2009

To be held in the Queen's Hall
on Saturday 9th May 2009

Please send in your booking form as soon as possible
and by 28th April at the latest



A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

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January 2009

Dear Old Wycombiensian

During 2008, I took over from Crispin White of Chairman of the Old Wycombiensians' Club. I would like to, at this point, extend by thanks and gratitude to Crispin for all of the work he did as Chairman and, in particular, his sterling efforts in leading the arrangements for many Old Wycombiensians' dinners.

It is an exciting time for the OWs' Club. As you will read elsewhere in the magazine, Matthew Appleton (1996-2002) joined the committee in 2008 and is leading the important work on re-engaging with all OWs. As part of this process, the committee took the decision – in consultation with the Headmaster – to change the membership process for the club. From now on, all boys when they leave RGS will automatically become a member and there will be no membership fee. We will be presenting this change for ratification at the next Annual General Meeting on 9th May 2009. However, rest assured that these changes will not mean any alteration to the way the OWs' club runs; rather it will just ensure that we are in contact with an even broader cross-section of the OW community. This will have very obvious benefits for, not only the club, but also RGS itself.

2009 is also an important year for the OWs as it sees the Centenary of the OWs' Club. It was founded in 1909 by the then-Headmaster of the school, Mr Arnison and that is it still going strong 100 years later is a testament to the warmth of feeling so many OWs have for their time at RGS. It would be great to see as many of you as possible at the OWs' Dinner in the Queens' Hall on Saturday 9th May to help celebrate this great milestone.

I would also like to draw your attention to the range of RGS and OW merchandise that is on offer, further details of which can be found on page 15.

Finally, as ever, I must pass on my thanks to Mrs Steph Russell and her colleagues in the School's Resources Centre, without whose help in printing and collating, the production of this magazine would not be possible. I would also like to thank all the members of the Committee, Ian Clark and the Headmaster for their continued support of the club.

My best wishes for 2009.

Yours sincerely

Simon Molden (1989-95)



HEADMASTER'S REPORT - JANUARY 2009

Dear Old Wycombiensian

It is difficult to comprehend that it was a year ago that I was writing to you to inform you of the activities undertaken by the boys at RGS as well as proposed developments. Once again, it has been a busy year, with much achieved and enjoyed by the boys and details can be found on our website (www.rgshw.com). I would encourage any OW to regularly log on to the site to keep up to date with RGS news.

This has been a sad year with the loss of two eminent OWs. Ian Fraser VC, died in early September (a memorial service will be held later this year in London to celebrate Ian's life). Richard Hickox, conductor of the LSO died in November. We remember these OWs with affection and thank them for their contribution to their country.

The core business of the School is to provide an outstanding educational opportunity for the boys and I am delighted to inform you that Ofsted visited the school in November and concluded that RGS remains an 'outstandingly effective school'. A copy of the report can be found on the school website.

Last year's examination results were excellent with over 75% of grades at A level being either A or B and at GCSE over 72% of grades were either A or A*. This reflects the hard work of the boys and the staff who continue to ensure that the boys are 'excited and enthused by the challenge of learning' (Ofsted 2008).

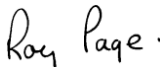
Activities on the sports field continue with many opportunities for boys to represent the school in a wide range of sports. The U15 XV and the 1st XV are still competing in their respective groups in the Daily Mail competition. The annual fixture against the MCC will be on 24 June and all OWs are welcome to this event.

This year's production will be the much acclaimed musical 'Guys and Dolls' and will take place in the Queen's Hall between Wednesday 25 March and Saturday 28 March inclusive. Tickets can be obtained from the RGS Resources Centre or using the RGS on line booking system. The OW's annual dinner will be on Saturday 9 May 2009, when Peter Gibson will be the guest speaker. I am sure that many of you will remember Peter who taught English and Philosophy at RGS from 1970 until 2006.

Last year, I brought you up to date on the situation with the Campaign 'Shaping our Destiny'. We have now submitted plans to the local planning office for new facilities which will incorporate changing rooms, fitness suite, sixth form centre and maths classrooms. Many of you will remember the gym block, probably with mixed emotions, and I hope that next time I write, I will be able to confirm that the building has been considerably improved. As soon as the plans are confirmed, we will place them on the website.

This year we were due to produce a new prospectus. I am delighted that OW, Simon Noakes, has led an innovative and original initiative in producing an interactive prospectus. We introduced this at the Open Evenings in September and it was a delight to watch prospective RGS students leaving the Queen's Hall encouraging their parents to be more prompt in their departure so that they could explore the enclosed CD. I am very grateful to the commitment and loyalty shown by Simon and his team. It has been a proud Headmaster who has produced examples of the prospectus at every Heads' Meeting he has attended and the response has been very positive. You can view the prospectus on the School's website. Please make sure you have the sound turned on!

I do hope to see many of you at the school functions and do be assured of a warm welcome should you call into the School. We are always pleased to see Old Wycombiensians.


Roy Page
Headmaster





SECRETARY'S NOTES

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Dear Old Wycombiensian

As you will read elsewhere in the magazine, changes are taking place in the manner in which the club operates and communicates with members. There will, in future, be more integration with the school, while retaining our identity. The school has kindly undertaken to bear some of our costs, in particular postage, and, as a consequence, the committee has decided to make membership free; which decision will be tabled for ratification at the next Annual General Meeting. This means that in future all OWs will automatically become members of the club, though application forms will still be required to be submitted in order to record contact details.

Ian Clark continues to control the database of members and the website, including producing the newsletters. Please, therefore, continue to contact Ian with any change of contact details and letters or information for posting on the website. His details are:

5, Foxhill Close
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire, HP13 5BL
Tel: 01494 530782
Email: ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk

I would also like to extend my appreciation of Ian's continuing contribution to the club.

The OWs' website (www.rgsow.com) continues to be a very interesting source of information on OWs, including letters and memories, photographs and contact details, as well as giving details of school activities. For those living abroad, there is a section organised by country, which may assist you in renewing local acquaintances. A major function of the club is to revive memories and maintain contact with and between OWs and any contribution you can make will be greatly appreciated. I would therefore point out the following:

- if you move house, please inform Ian of your new address
- if you are in contact with an OW who is not presently a member, please inform him that he is eligible for free membership and direct them to the website
- if you see anything about an OW in the papers, or hear anything through any other medium, please provide details to Ian.

Last year's dinner was a great success, albeit we could have had more members attending. I would encourage you to come along this year on Saturday 9th May 2009. This year we are encouraging any old boy who left in a year ending in 9 to attend. The dinner is an opportunity to revisit the school and have a guided tour, as well as perhaps organising a table for contemporaries. In addition there are the various sporting reunions which are being arranged, and your support for these would be much appreciated.

Best wishes for 2009.

Chris Andrew (1959-1967)



NEWS

Old Wycombiensians' Club

There are many important questions about RGS and its history that can be readily answered, such as when did it receive its Royal Charter and which two Old Wycombiensians were awarded the Victoria Cross? However, one seemingly simple question proves much more problematic: just how many OWs are there? The only thing certain about the answer is its uncertainty. Estimates range from around 5,000 to over 8,000. It was this question and its uncertain answer which earlier this year led a small group of OWs, with the full support of by the Headmaster, to investigate the relationship that RGS has with its old boys.

The precise reason that this seemingly simple answer is unknown relates to the fact that often when a Wycombiensian becomes an OW, their relationship with the School ends. Those who do maintain a relationship with RGS do so of their own volition, and their proactive endeavours should be rightly applauded. However, that is not to say that those OWs who lose touch do so deliberately. For many, the frantic university years followed by a hectic working life away from south Buckinghamshire, mean that keeping in touch with the School understandably slips down their list of priorities. In losing touch with its OWs, it becomes impossible for the RGS to know how many there are.

The conclusion that was reached is that for RGS to know how many OWs there are, it must re-establish a relationship with the majority of them. Whilst doing this will be a means to the end of answering the numerical question, it is also very much an end in itself. Following meetings with the Headmaster, the OW Committee and a number of OWs, a plan was formed to build that relationship.

It was decided that the most effective way to achieve it would be to develop an OW e-newsletter, which will be e-mailed quarterly. Ian Clark has already started this process by contacting all OWs whose e-mail addresses appear on the website and he will continue to do this. This process enables OWs to receive information without themselves having to seek it out. However, it may also prompt them to go further and respond to invitations to attend the OWs' dinner, tour the school, watch the 1st XV and more.

Our initial aim is to increase the spread of the e-newsletter. Many OWs who have received the recent e-mails have sent Ian contact details of other OWs, which has been much appreciated. Through this, we will have 1,500 active addresses by the end of the year. This is only a start. In due course, they will be stored on an OWs' database, which will be an invaluable way of ensuring that the RGS never again loses track of so many OWs. If you would like your e-mail address to go on the website, where details can be seen by other OWs, please let Ian know.

Every OW I meet speaks of RGS with great warmth and, if they have lost touch, laments it. By means of the e-newsletter and database, we hope this will be prevented. I very much hope that we can count on your support in this venture and would welcome any thoughts as to what we can do more to improve communication. Please contact me at matthew.appleton@cantab.net.

As outlined above, the first step is to collect as many OW e-mail addresses as we can. I would ask you to ask any OWs you know to send an e-mail with their name and years at the RGS to ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk. This exciting venture will then be able to begin.

Matthew Appleton (1996-2002)



NEWS

2008 sadly saw the deaths of two of RGS' most distinguished old boys.

Ian Fraser

Old Wycombiensians and the whole school community was saddened to learn of the death of one of its most illustrious Old Boys, Ian Edward Fraser, VC, DSC, RD and Bar, who died in Liverpool on 2nd September 2008, aged 88. He was at the RGS from Sept 1933 to December 1935.

Lieutenant Fraser commanded HM Midget Submarine XE-3 in her successful attack on the Japanese heavy cruiser Takao (9,850 tons) at her moorings in Johore Strait, Singapore, on 31st July 1945. During the long approach up the Singapore Straits, XE-3 deliberately left the believed safe channel and entered mined waters to avoid suspected hydrophone posts. The target was aground, or nearly aground, both fore and aft, and only under the midships portion was there sufficient water for XE-3 to place herself under the cruiser. For forty minutes she pushed her way along the sea bed until finally Lieutenant Fraser managed to force her right under the centre of the cruiser. Here he placed the limpets and dropped his main side charge. Great difficulty was experienced in extricating the craft after the attack had been completed, but XE-3 was finally clear and commenced her long journey out to sea.

The Official Citation of the award of a Victoria Cross stated: "The courage and determination of Lieutenant Fraser are beyond all praise. Any man not possessed of his relentless determination to achieve his objective in full, regardless of all consequences, would have dropped his charges alongside the target. The approach and withdrawal entailed a passage of eighty miles through water which had been

mined by both the enemy and ourselves, past hydrophonic positions, over loops and controlled minefields, and through an anti submarine boom."

The School was delighted when he agreed to lend his name to our new Fraser-Youens Boarding House and he was proud to be associated with our earlier VC winner, Frederick Youens.

Richard Hickox

Richard Hickox – who was at RGS from 1959-62 - was one of the most talented, successful and popular conductors of his generation with boundless energy and a gift for inspiring the musicians he worked with to produce often brilliant performances.

Richard sadly died on November 23rd 2008 of a suspected heart attack after a recording session in Wales. From RGS, he won an organ scholarship to Queens' College, Cambridge, and returned to his native Wooburn with a group of friends to put on the first of the town's annual festivals. He would also personally conduct a choral concert at the Wycombe Swan every other year and formed the successful Wooburn Singers Choir in 1967.

He was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2002.

The Clocktower

In 2008, the Clocktower was given its first renovation since 1981. Pictures of this and the impressive finished article can be found at <http://www.rgshw.com/node/728>.



OLD WYCOMBIENSIANS' SPORT

OWs' Hockey

A match took place late in the afternoon of 26th April 2008 at the Cressex Astro between an OWs' XI and one from High Wycombe HC that included three OWs.

Both sides played with remarkable continuity considering that they had just been brought together on the day, but HWHC took an early lead through quality play from Duncan Parnis. Although an exquisite lob from ex-Great Britain Olympic captain, Jon Wyatt, opened the OWs' scoring, HWHC soon extended its lead from 2-1 to 6-3 as the OWs tired.

However, the OWs belied their advancing years and lack of fitness to stage a late rally and win a most entertaining and enjoyable game by just one goal with the final score 8-7.

Special thanks go to the members of HWHC and the umpires Richard Spragg and Tim Stone for their contribution to a memorable match.

Old Wycombiensians: Dan Anderson, Scott Ashdown, Colin Carter, Gavin Elliott, Michael John, Arshad Khan, Levon Litster, Mark Madden, Simon Molden, Simon Samuel, David Willmot, Jon Wyatt.
OWs playing for HWHC: Ian Harman, Duncan Parnis, Simon Webber (ex-staff).



OWs' Shooting

The shoot took place in the school rifle range on 26th April 2008 and was attended by eleven OWs and five current pupils. Split into four details, the shoot comprised five ranging shots, ten shots deliberate, ten shots rapid deliberate in 90 seconds and finally ten shots rapid deliberate in 60 seconds. Scores for OWs and boys were averaged out and the result was 249 for the OWs and 255 for the boys; yet another win for the boys, but the OWs are closing the gap. Congratulations must go to Chris Webb and Artyom Tucker, respectively highest scorers for the OWs and the boys.

Old Wycombiensians: Peter Allen, Chris Andrew, Paul Arthur, Chris Barber, Ed Clark, Rodrick Griffiths, Graham Jeal, Francis Mostyn, Dave Pickering, Chris Swinhoe-Standen and Chris Webb.

OWs' Cricket

The Old Wycombiensians' XI played the School 1st XI in the annual match for the Duncan Moore Cup on Wednesday 16th July 2008. The OWs batted first and scored 260 for 4 with Richard Royce scoring a fine hundred and Bob Dix 64.

The School scored 262 for 4 thanks to Chris Elder posting a magnificent 149, with 13 sixes, and 12 fours, and J.C. Potgieter 56 not out. The School thus won by six wickets. Chris' innings is probably the highest score ever made by a boy on the School field. Congratulations to him and the School XI for their great win.

It was great to see some players playing for the first time in this annual fixture, which now stands at: Old Wycombiensians – five wins; School 1st XI – three wins.



Old Wycombiensians: Bob Dix (c - 2000); Richard Royce (1996); Tim Woodstock (2000); James Nicholas (2000); Joe Stevens; Saj Zaib (1988); Hash Hussain (2007); Mani Sharma (2007); Matt Sutcliffe (2000); Tahir Mehmood (1982); Phil Wideson (2001).

OWs' Golf

The Annual Old Wycombiensians versus Staff Golf match took place on Friday 27th June 2008 at Weston Turville Golf Club, with the usual regulars turning up. A good number of others said that they would like to have played, and one player was stuck at Marylebone when the railway line was closed.

It was great to welcome for the first time Stuart Wilson, Eddy Smyth, and Ian Wooster. Ian goes off to USA shortly and we wish him all the best. The weather remained dry, just. The matches were all close with three of them going to the 18th green. The results were:

- Robin Dorkings (1963) and Mark Forrester (1963) beat Gareth Sheedy and Eddy Smyth (2007)* by 1 hole
- Martin Priestley (1963) and Steven John (1970) lost to Ian Wilson and Trevor Woolliams** by 1 hole
- Stuart Wilson (1983) and Ian Wooster (1987) finished all square with Dan Bradley
- Paul Dolphin (1976) and Ian Clark lost to Peter Toller** and Mike Earl by 3&1

The Staff thus beat the OWs 2.5 to 1.5.

* Old Boy playing for the Staff Team.

** Also Old Wycombiensians

OWs' Rugby

On 31st August 2008, an Old Wycombiensians' XV – arranged by James Turner (1999-2006) entered the Cronk-Cunis National U21 Old Boys' tournament, a

knock-out competition hosted by King's College School, Wimbledon Old Boys' Rugby Club. It features nearly 50 of England's top old boys' rugby teams and this was the first occasion in its 12-year history that RGS had fielded a side.

Having assembled a somewhat scratch squad and having not had the opportunity to train together prior to the tournament, the team lost narrowly in their opening match in the Cup competition to a more organised Chislehurst & Sidcup GS side, 14-17. However, now competing in the Plate Competition, the OWs played strongly, defeating Eastbourne College (10-0) and Merchant Taylors' School (6-3) to progress to the semi-final. Here, against Churcher's College, the scores were tied at the end of normal time and the OWs snatched a dramatic victory with a golden try in extra-time to seal a 15-10 win.

In the final, despite many players being on the verge of exhaustion, the team somehow managed to find some energy reserves to see off Lord Wandsworth College, 12-8, with some outstanding rugby and so clinch victory in the Plate competition.

It is hoped that with liaison with the School, a tradition can be made of entering the competition, given our strong rugby heritage. If any OWs are interested in playing in this competition in the future, please contact the Chairman.

Old Wycombiensians: Freddie Stockwell, Alex Johnstone, Matt Dawes, Chris Zair, Aaron Bolton (guest), Nick Fischer, Grahame Fischer, Nick Johnstone, Chris Johnstone, James Turner, Ben Francis, Christian O'Kelly, Cameron Law, Roddy Jonas, Rob Record, Ashley Bailey, Marcus Da Costa, Colin Hudson.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PLAY IN ANY OF
THE 2009 SPORTING REUNIONS MATCHES,
PLEASE RETURN YOUR REPLY SLIP AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE**



MEMORIES OF THE ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL IN THE 1940S

From Air Vice-Marshal P.S. Collins, CB, AFC, BA (1941 – 48)

In September 1939, as war was declared, my twin brother, David, and I were evacuated from the outskirts of London. Initially, we were sent inexplicably to Ipswich, 90 miles closer to the enemy and with a significant docks area! After a number of vicissitudes, we were moved to High Wycombe and started at West Wycombe Primary School, where we both passed the 11 plus and in September 1941, we were enrolled in the Royal Grammar School. Each day we travelled by bus from Hughenden Valley, alighting at the bottom of Green Lane. From there we climbed the hill, passing the relatively few houses that were there at that time and then through the beech woods, emerging on to the playing fields at the rear of the school.

The Headmaster then was the redoubtable E.R. Tucker – “Boss” Tucker as we knew him. “Sam” Morgan was the Deputy Headmaster. Many of the regular male staff were away fighting for their country and there had obviously been a few stop-gap appointments. Gym was taught by Mr Howard Johnson, who suffered from a club foot, and he was assisted by the strangely-named Zoe C.U. Boddy to whom he later became engaged! There was also, I remember, an austere and dignified lady, Miss Pollard, who taught some Classics. She had come from the Abbey School, I think. Other names I recall include “Pilgy” Jones, the Maths master who had an unerring aim with the chalk if he thought your attention was wandering, Mr Hett (possibly French) and Mr Bicknell (possibly English).

After our induction year in the Lower Third, David and I were separated. Since we were identical twins and looked very much alike, this was probably just as well. David was put on the Science side while I would follow the Arts curriculum. Both of us were placed in the fast stream, which meant we would

take our School Certificate (the GCSE of the day) at 15 and our Higher school Certificate (A Levels) at 17. Such a timeframe enabled the brighter pupils to stay on for a third year in the Sixth Form and contend for Oxbridge scholarships and exhibitions, but we were scarcely conscious of that at the time. I was introduced to Latin and at a later stage to Greek, both subjects taught in his inimitable way by our ebullient Headmaster. I still remember his joke about the drunk who tried to order yet another bottle of wine in an upmarket restaurant: “Bring me some more Hock, waiter,” he slurred, “You know, hic, haec, hoc!”. The wine did not arrive. He summoned the waiter, saying, “Didn’t I order another bottle of Hock?” “Yes sir,” replied the erudite flunkey, “but then you declined it!”

Each morning began with assembly in the school hall (now the Library) where we gathered for prayers and a hymn. This was accompanied on the piano by one of the boys. I remember Cowlett was especially skilled at this - and if he did not turn up Mr Tucker would leap to the instrument himself and lead the singing from the keyboard. His announcements would include reference to the progress of the war and to any news of Old Boys. When Lieutenant Fraser was awarded the Victoria Cross for his exploits in midget submarines, echoing the achievement of Youens in the First World War, he decided to rename two of the school houses (previously King’s and Queen’s) after these two heroes. He was an inspiring Headmaster with a great and justified pride in his school. He was enormously proud when he was able to announce that he had been elected to the Headmasters’ Conference, an accolade which, as he assured us, put RGS in the same academic bracket as the best public schools. He acquired an enormous black American car – a Packard – which he drove regally around



the district and parked ostentatiously on the parade ground in front of the main building. Lord knows how he got the petrol!

As it has now, the RGS then had an excellent sporting reputation. The rugby XV enjoyed spectacular success and two pupils of my generation, Ted Woodward and Ron Syrett, ended up playing for England. Woodward was an exceptional all-round athlete. I think he held the school record for the 100 yards and the long jump as well as captaining the cricket team. Neither David nor I were distinguished sportsmen but we held our own academically and in the musical side of the school. Music teaching had been revolutionised by the arrival of Mr Bernarr Rainbow. He made it fun and inspired many of us to participate in ways which would have been inconceivable before. He persuaded the Headmaster to allow Gilbert and Sullivan to replace Shakespeare in the annual school drama production. In 1947, we put on the *Pirates of Penzance* as our first venture in this exciting genre. At that time, of course, it was not considered proper to invite the girls from the High School to play the female parts. I had been obliged to play Viola in *Twelfth Night* in the previous year! However, we had plenty of treble voices in the Junior School and they performed very well. I was the Pirate King, Bernard Peatey sang Frederick and D.B.Hawkins was an impressive Major-General Stanley. It was the start of a new era. Mr Rainbow was in many ways a similar character to Mr Venvell who inspires

the magnificent standards achieved by the RGS Music Department today.

The Sixth Form in those days occupied what was then the Library in the right hand wing of the old main school building. As a Senior Prefect, I had some disciplinary powers over the younger boys and we had a periodic Prefects' Meeting at which recalcitrant miscreants were forced to appear for summary justice. Corporal punishment was still permissible in those days and the Head Boy was empowered to administer it (up to three strokes, I think). I have a faded photograph of A.G.Duckering in full swing! Academically, I was profoundly influenced by some outstanding teachers. Mr Cave and, later, Mr Ashford encouraged me in History, while Mr A.G.Standing (who also produced the *Pirates*) was an inspiring English master. I think my year achieved four State Scholarships and I gained a County Major award which took me to Birmingham University where I joined the Air Squadron and, unknowingly at the time, began a path towards the upper reaches of the Royal Air Force.

They say that school days are the happiest days of your life. Looking back over 78 years, I would not go quite that far, but I did thoroughly enjoy my time at RGS. Even in wartime it was a special place and it undoubtedly provided me with the foundation for a happy and successful life.

Long may it continue!

OLD WYCOMBIENSIANS' SPORTING REUNIONS 2009

Hockey and shooting:

Saturday 9th May (before the Annual Dinner)

Golf versus the staff:

Friday 26th June at 4.00 p.m.

Cricket versus the School 1st XI:

Date tbc

If you would like to take part in any of these events, please return the enclosed reply slip



File Past

From the Wycombiensian of 1920:

The Tank, presented to High Wycombe, in consideration of the town's very handsome efforts in connection with the War Savings Associations, has at last arrived, and at present occupies a proud position on a concrete emplacement prepared for it in front of the School. Its imperturbable progress up Amersham Hill took place amid scenes of "the wildest enthusiasm;" the Law cleared a path before it, the Army guided it along that path, and members of the R.G.S. – and other – regarded all the proceedings with the liveliest possible interest and curiosity.

From the Wycombiensian of 1937:

AND OLD BOY WRITES FROM NAZI GERMANY

It is still possible to find intelligent young people among the older students of about twenty-two to twenty-five years of age, more especially those who have been out of Germany. There is a striking difference, however, between these and the freshmen of to-day lately "educated" in the army and the labour camps. One shudders to think of the mentality of the students in three or four years' time when the present school education bears fruit. Their history books appear to be sadly different from ours, and they have a most unholy tendency to regard war as being the natural training for strength and heroism. Of course most of the good professors have found it impossible to carry on with the present-day doctrine, even though they have no Jewish blood in their veins.

From the Wycombiensian of 1950:

THE NEW SCHOOL TERM

From an Old Fag to a New Inmate

When you enter the august portals of the School, remember it has existed since 1562, and that is a very long time ago. Therefore respect its traditions and it will respect you. It is advisable at this stage in your career to abandon all "nannies," "governesses," "night nurses," and "divers encumbrances," and realise that you are a Boy from now on. Don't despair over this. Instead, play the game hard and don't call you form-master "Dad."

From the Wycombiensian of 1972:

SCHOOL UNIFORM AND INDIVIDUALITY

All individuality is wiped out at one monstrous stroke. On entering Grammar or High school, children are issued with a formidable list of what to wear. The budding 11-year-old individualist is press-ganged into clothing tailored to blot out his personality, turning him into a nobody with embroidered badge; even the colours of scarves or socks are specified by some authority.

It is indeed a pathetic site to see England's budding individualists and future leaders tumble out of classrooms all dressed the same way (an omen perhaps – Marylebone station, 8.30 a.m.?). Someone once compared this to a bed of flowers being dug up and turnips planted in their stead.



The Best Days of your life

From the Minutes of RGS Prefects' Meetings, 1931-33:

Meeting held on Monday October 27th 1930

All prefects were present.

Jones (ii) was brought up by Irwin for persistent cheek and insolence when spoken to. It had been found that lines were useless.

Three strokes were administered.

Burrows (ii) was brought up by Kyle who had several times been caught ragging small boys in and around the Junior cloakroom. He had been warned several times.

Three strokes were administered.

R.B.Webber
Senior Prefect

Meeting held on Monday February 23rd 1931

Most of the prefects were present.

Pogson was brought up by L.W.Cradwick for failing to do lines set for wearing shoes in school. No excuse was offered.

Pogson and Blackford were brought up by Harris for bad behaviour while watching a school match, and for lack of respect to a prefect. No excuses were offered.

Four strokes were administered in each case.

E.S.Paice
Senior Prefect

Meeting held on Tuesday October 10th 1931

All of the prefects were present with the exception of Hutton

Barnard (ii) was brought up by L.W.Cradwick for failure to do lines. These lines were set some three weeks before for check, and no attempt had been made to do any of them. The only reason was laziness, so three strokes were administered.

Harris (ii) was also brought up by L.W.Cradwick for a similar offence. In this case some attempt had been made to do lines set for sheer disobedience over three weeks previously but owing to slackness they had never been completed. It was decided to administer two strokes.

H.G.Tidy
Senior Prefect

Meeting held on December 11th 1933

In the presence of F.W.Essex, F.R.Kay, S.M.Carr, S.A.Goulborn, A.N.Johnson, P.G.Stevens.

Cole, Jutsum, Bates (A.G.), Seymour, Austin, Roberts were summoned by F.R.Kay for hooliganism in the corridor during the lunch period. The accused were allowed the option of attending a full meeting on the prefects, but unanimously decided to be summarily dealt with. Accordingly, three strokes were given in each case.

F.W.Essex



Annual General Meeting

The A.G.M. of the Old Wycombiensians' Club took place on Saturday 26th April 2008 in the School Library, with 15 Old Boys present. Draft accounts were tabled and approved. Ian Birch, George Bates, Robin Dorkings, Andrew MacTavish and Martin Myers, the committee members retiring by rotation, offered themselves for re-election and were re-elected. Matthew Appleton was elected to the committee in place of David Woodbridge, who has resigned.

Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner, held on 26th April, was attended by 59 Old Boys, six teachers (both past and present), the Head Boy and his two deputies and six World Challenge boys. The reduced number of Old Boys attending compared with previous years was disappointing and it is to be hoped that this downward cycle in attendance will be reversed next year, which will be the Club's centenary year.

After the dinner, the Headmaster gave a brief review of the school and presented a slide show reflecting the diverse nature of activities undertaken over the past year. This was followed by a light show put on by the boys from the lighting team, which was most entertaining.

The Guest of Honour was Colin Tattersall who taught at the school between 1984 and 2003, notably contributing to the prowess of numerous rugby XV's and leading to the school becoming a force to be reckoned with in national competitions. David Andrew proposed the toast to Colin and Colin replied with reminiscences and anecdotes of his time at the school.

During the afternoon of the dinner there were sporting reunions for hockey players and shooters.

Letters to the Editor

From D.A.E. Cox (1939-1945)

I was intrigued by Andrew MacTavish's dissertation on 149 in the January 2008 of the RGS Old Boys' Magazine and just wonder whether I have the knowledge of the event that covers this mystery. I fail to see where the humour that might be associated with this is however. It was not funny at the time and memory can play tricks.

I need to take you back to World War II and June 1944. At that time Hitler was keen on burning our towns and cities and night after night we suffered air raids of incendiary bombs and to counter this, the RGS set up a "night watch" system. Members of the sixth form were given the opportunity to "fire watch," which meant spending the night in the building. We received suitable training on the method to be employed to deal with any incendiary device. The training also included how to use the bucket, the sand and the long-reach tongs. We were paid the princely sum of half-a-crown (I think) which in terms of cash in hand was quite an incentive for impoverished sixth-formers. A member of the teaching staff was also employed to accompany us.

One summer's day, Goldsmith (I cannot recall his Christian name) and I were on fire watch and at around 20.00 hrs were in the holy of holies, the Staff Common Room, searching for matches to make ourselves a cup of tea, when there was an almighty explosion and the place was filled with blue smoke. I had been standing by the door and found myself in a heap against the wall on the far side, soon to be joined by Goldsmith who was likewise blown out of the room and landed on top of me. We ran to get our tin hats and returned to the front door of the school to be met by "Brandy" – Mr Brand, the maths master who was on duty with us - and the spectacle of a column of black smoke rising from the field in front of the



school; now a development of houses called Windsor Drive.

During the next little while, my father, on leave from the RAF, arrived; my mother had convinced him that the smoke she saw was coming from the RGS where she knew I was staying the night. We lived at the top of Marlow Hill and the view was clear. Minutes later two fire engines arrived plus an ambulance answering an urgent call that the RGS had received a direct hit.

It was then that Mr Brand took charge, assuring the emergency services that they were not needed and getting rid of us by asking us to assess the damage to the school. Some time later we reported that 149 windows had been blown in, but apart from that the school was still standing. The next day we learnt from someone who knew about these things that had the doodle bug's engine cut out a few seconds later, the school would have received the full power of the flying bomb and this tale would not have been penned by me!

These flying bombs were fuelled to reach London and the south-east, but some travelled further according to the prevailing wind. I witnessed three around Wycombe: the RGS one; Hughenden-cum-Downley area one afternoon when I was walking home after school; and another that over flew Lane End, its fiery tail streaming behind it late at night, to explode in a field on the edge of a wood.

With the intervening years, memory plays tricks as I have said. All this took place some sixty-five years back and I wonder if Goldsmith is somewhere out there and can confirm or add any details to my recollection. There are three numbers that I associate with that event 52, 149 and 152, but I cannot place their significance. I am sure one recounts the number of windows blown in. I am in my 81st year and my brain is not as nimble as it once was!

Old Boys' Notes

ASHCROFT. MA (1962-64) Michael generously paid a £75,000 reward which secured the return of 96 medals, including 9 VCs, which had been stolen from the Army Museum at Waioura, New Zealand, in December 2007.

CAMDEN. L (1999-2006) Luke, currently at Keble College, Oxford, is next year's Master of the Oxford University Society of Change Ringers.

CANN. GJ (1979-85) Gareth was promoted to the rank of Assistant Chief Constable of the West Midlands Police Force on his 40th birthday.

COHEN. A (1997-2003) Alistair graduated from the University of Manchester in 2007 with a First as Master of Engineering.

GAY. SM (1967-74) Simon appeared on *Mastermind* recently, performing creditably on 'Coronations since 1066.'

HILL. C (1998-2001) Charlie is now an employee of the BMW Sytner High Wycombe dealership. On completing his technician's apprenticeship he was named BMW Group Academy UK's Best Improver 2007, and has been nominated for a Learning and Skills Council 'Learning First' Award.

JOHNSON. D (1998-2004) David graduated from Queens' College, Cambridge, in 2007 with a starred First in Part II of the Music Tripos, having scored top marks of his year.

KHERA. J (1997-2003) Jas graduated from King's College, Cambridge, in 2007 with a First in Part II of the Oriental Tripos.

KINGSNORTH. P (1985-91) Paul is a writer, environmentalist and poet – and an honorary member of the Lani tribe in New Guinea. He was arrested during the 1993



Twyford Downs road protests, and was named one of Britain's 'top 10 troublemakers' by the *New Statesman* in 2000. He was deputy editor of the *Ecologist* and is a frequent media contributor. His first book, *One No, Many Yeses*, was published in 2003; his most recent book, *Real England*, was published in April 2008.

SMITH. CW (1993-99) Christopher captained the Worcester College, Oxford, team in the 2007-08 season of *University Challenge*.

WALKER. A (1985-91) Alexander made his debut in 2007 at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, conducting the *Nutcracker Suite*.

WARREN. S (1998-2004) Sean graduated from Queens' College, Cambridge, in 2007 with a First in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos.

Obituaries

Staff

PATTINSON. J Jean was the widow of the Deputy Headmaster, Reginald Pattinson, who served on the staff between 1936 and 1977. She was responsible for many years for running the domestic side of Tyler's Wood boarding house, which she and her husband founded in 1948. After her husband's death she served as matron in

School House under Rev. John Skipp. She died in March 2008, aged 94.

PICKRUHL. JE (2004-05) Jean, who taught English, died in early 2008.

Old Boys

BROOK. AJ (1994-95) Alastair died in 2007.

GRANT. R (1932-40) Roger died recently, aged 85.

MAHER. RJ (1966-73) Jimmy died recently.

STEVENS. GW (1936-41) Geoffrey, who died on 23rd December 2007, aged 81, was boxing finalist at the RGS for three years in succession. He served in the Royal Navy and saw action in the Mediterranean. After the war, he held a variety of managerial positions and rose to be International Director of Reeves Brothers. He was a Church of England church warden and reader, and also chairman of governors at Longwick C. of E. Combined School.

WICKENS. FC (1931-38) Frederick died on 1st March 2007, aged 87. He was the first RGS boy to win an Open Scholarship to Oxbridge when he went up to Jesus College, Cambridge, in 1938. After the war, he pursued a career as an English teacher. He is survived by his four children and by his brother **DONALD** (1935-43).

OLD WYCOMBIENSIANS' TIES

These are available from the Treasurer – Danny White – and cost £25, including p&p.

If you would like one, please send a cheque for £25 – made payable to "The Old Wycombiensians' Club" - to Danny at 18 Coppice Way, Hedgerley, Buckinghamshire, SL2 3YL.

If you live abroad, please e-mail Danny (dannywhite@hedgerley.fsnet.co.uk) and he will provide a cost including overseas postage.

The tie is 100% silk and an image of the design can be found at
http://www.rgsow.com/index2_nj.php?content=newsletters/archive.php?year=08

A range of other RGS merchandise is available from the School. Details can be found at
<http://www.rgshw.com/files/GiftsOrderForm.pdf>.



OLD WYCOMBIENSIANS' SPORTING REUNIONS, AGM AND ANNUAL DINNER

Saturday 9th May 2009

- From 2.30 p.m.** Hockey or Shooting matches. See the Application form.
- 6.00 p.m.** A tour of the School for those who are interested. Bar opens.
- 6.30 p.m.** AGM in the School Library.
- 7.30 p.m.** Annual Dinner in the Queen's Hall.

Our Guest of Honour will be Peter Gibson who taught English and Philosophy at RGS between 1970 and 2006. Peter is remembered for many contributions to the life of the school, but perhaps mostly for having established Philosophy at sixth form option, firstly as an 'AS' Level in 1988 and then as a full 'A' Level in 1994.

The Headmaster, Roy Page, who will have taught many of you over the last 35 years, will talk about the RGS present and future and reflect on the Centenary of the Old Wycombiensians' Club, which falls in 2009.

There will be a four-course meal, and it should be a very good one. A bar will be organised by the RGS Parents' Association and all profits go to school projects. As in past years, we are reserving tables for those who play in the various sporting events in the afternoon. For everybody else we will try to arrange the seating to suit you. The intention is that the formal part of the evening will be over by 9.45 p.m., so that there will be plenty of time for conversation. It should be a really enjoyable occasion. We are always very happy to see groups of OWs attending, so if you would like us to advertise a group reunion on the website, please e-mail Ian Clark (ianrclark@yahoo.co.uk).

This year the cost of the Dinner will be £29.00 for those in full time education and £35.00 for all others. If you would like to come, please complete the enclosed form, and send it to Danny White as soon as possible, and by **Tuesday 28th April** at the very latest. You will receive the confirmation of your application and the Agenda of the AGM, by email or by letter shortly after 1st April. If you would like a reply through the post, please send an SAE with your application.

Apart from the hockey and shooting on 9th May, we are arranging golf, cricket and tennis matches in the Summer Term. Dates, where known, are given on the attached reply slip. If you want to participate in any of the Sporting Reunions, please complete and send in the reply slip with your dinner application. If you want further information, contact David Stone for hockey (david.stone5@ntlworld.com), Chris Andrew (chris.andrew@besfordgroup.com) for shooting and Ian Clark (ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk) for the summer sports.

We look forward to seeing you on 9th May.

Simon Molden
Chairman



OLD WYCOMBIENSIAN LODGE

During the last twelve months the lodge has seen two new and youthful members. This may not sound very much but we are small and as one humorist remarked, "the new members have significantly reduced the average age and increased average mobility!"

The lodge welcomes members from the ranks of close relatives of old boys - fathers, brothers and sons and recently a son-in-law. School staff are also qualified to join and in the past have included E.R.Tucker, Peter Smaje and Ron Emery.

Charity, the primary consideration of every Freemason, has been well addressed over the last year. We have given financial support to the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmans' Families Association, an old peoples' home, the HURT appeal for children in pain and the appeal by High Wycombe hospital for the keyhole surgery fund. In addition, and foremost among our concerns over the year, has been the Opportunities Playgroup in Marlow. This organisation, largely run by volunteers, supports families with children suffering some form of disability. The work done by the playgroup gives much needed relief to hard pressed parents and much happiness to the children. The playgroup found itself without funding and local freemasons stepped in to keep them going.

We are proud of this charitable side to our activities and this year we have donated a cup - *The Community Service Cup* to the school. The cup, along with a book to the value of £50 will be presented annually to the pupil who has done most for the community. We are delighted that the school accepted our offer and we are pleased that this link with the school has been formed.

We are hoping that the lodge and the school may find joint activities in community work.

However, freemasonry has its lighter side with much good fellowship and new friendships made with other masons, including overseas. Wherever a mason travels, he can find a brother and attend meetings.

Enquiries about the lodge are welcome and can be made to our secretary:

W.E Shackell C.B.E.
"Applewood"
Tudor Close
Pulborough
West Sussex.
RH202EF.

Tel: 01798875109.
Email: willie_shackell@tinyworld.co.uk



THE ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL - WHISKY CLUB

In conjunction with Polmac (UK) Ltd., the RGS is proud to be able to offer Old Wycombiensians the opportunity to purchase a unique collection of finest Speyside Malt and Blended Whiskies bearing the RGS label.

Single Speyside Malt Scotch Whisky (Code: 70SSMW)

This 70cl single malt whisky is presented in a Lindenwood box with clear stain finish and blue RGS logo on the lid. £24.95

An elegant and sophisticated Single Speyside Malt Whisky highly prized for its strength of character and individuality. Everything is in place to produce one of Scotland's finest single malt whiskies; pure spring water from the mighty Cairngorm mountains, that flows through peaty moors, to produce water that is exceptionally soft and flavoursome; the finest quality barley from the Moray Firth region and the unsurpassed distillation skills, that provide our RGS Single Speyside Malt Whisky with its unique style and character. Excellence is truly worth waiting for!

Superior Choice Blended Scotch Whisky (Code: 70BSW)

This 70cl blended whisky comes in a standard tall, round, clear glass bottle with RGS label. £13.95

A beautifully smooth and rounded Blended Scotch Whisky of the finest quality. Our RGS Superior Choice, Blended Scotch Whisky is produced by highly skilled, Master Blenders, using traditional whisky blending skills, to "meld" together the subtle flavours and character of the finest quality single malt whiskies and grain whiskies. After blending, the newly created whisky is returned to natural oak casks for further maturation, to ensure "a marriage made in heaven!"

5 Miniature Whisky Gift Set (Code: 5MGS)

Presented in a blue stained wooden box embossed with a gold RGS logo on the lid, this box contains two 5cl RGS Single Speyside Malt Whisky miniatures and three 5cl RGS Blended Whisky miniatures. £17.95 per box

10% of all sale proceeds will go to the School

100% Guarantee – Every purchase you make is 100% guaranteed

If you are dissatisfied with any purchase, simply return it within 30 days for a full refund

To place an order use the order form contained in the RGS Old Boys magazine or go onto the RGS web site www.rgshw.com/whisky or contact Pippa Gamester at School (01494 551416), e-mail pg@rgshw.com

The whiskies will be available over the bar at the Old Wycombiensians' Dinner and can be purchased or ordered on the night

Postage and Packing Charges: *(not applicable if orders are collected, by an adult, from the school)*

1 item - £6.50, 2 items - £9.50, 3 items - £11.50,
4 items - £14.50, 5 items - £15.50, 6 items - £17.50



ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL WHISKY CLUB

**Please complete this order form and return it to
Polmac (UK) Ltd, 3 The Briars, High Wycombe HP11 1ED**

	No of bottles	Total Cost
Code: 7022MW I would like to order the following number of 70cl bottles of RGS SINGLE SPEYSIDE MALT WHISKY in Lindenwood Presentation Case with blue RGS logo @ £24.95 per bottle	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>
Code: 70BSW I would like to order the following number of 70cl bottles of RGS SUPERIOR CHOICE BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY with RGS logo on the label @ £13.95 per bottle	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>
Code: 5MGS I would like to order the following number of Gift Sets comprising 2 x 5cl bottles of RGS Single Speyside Malt Whisky and 3 x 5cl bottles of RGS Superior Choice Blended Scotch Whisky presented in a blue stain presentation box with gold RGS logo @ £17.95 per box	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>
If you want to collect your order from the School please tick this box. There will be no packing or postage charge	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="checkbox"/>	
If you want us to send your order to you please add on the appropriate postage and packing charge as detailed below:	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>
<small>1 item - £6.50, 2 items - £9.50, 3 items - £11.50, 4 items - £14.50, 5 items - £15.50, 6 items - £17.50, 7+ items – please contact Polmac (UK) Ltd on 01494 533857</small>		
TOTAL COST OF ORDER (including P&P)		<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>

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Address _____

Daytime Tel. _____ Evening Tel. _____

E-mail _____

CHEQUES WITH ORDER PAYABLE TO: Polmac (UK) Ltd

We aim to deliver within 14 working days of receipt of your order.

School Contact: Pippa Gamester (01494) 551416 or pg@rgshw.com