

## NEWSLETTER FEB 2010

**Director of Development Erik Westrup excerpts from 1931 magazine Extracts from the 2010 OW magazine "Jock" Evely OW Internationals Peter Richards RGS under snow**

**EDITOR WRITES:** The Annual OW magazine and letters have now been posted to the paid-up life members.

If you feel you should have received a magazine or letters by post, and have not done so by Mar 1st, please contact me. If at the moment you do not receive an email about four times a year with news of the RGS and the OW Club, and you would like to, please email me with your name and the years you were at the RGS. In recent months the number of email addresses on our list has grown to about 1900, which is great. It would be good if you are in contact with other OWs, for you to ask them if they would like to receive the emails.

**Ian R Clark** email address: [ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk)

### EXTRACTS FROM THE MAGAZINE

A lot of what appears has already been published in earlier newsletters, but the letters from the Chairman, Secretary, Roy Page, Headmaster, and another OW, Robin Dorkings are new, and these are published below:

**A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN** e-mail address: [simon@scmolden.co.uk](mailto:simon@scmolden.co.uk)

Dear Old Wycombiensian,



As we reported in last year's magazine, the Old Wycombiensians' Club is currently undergoing some changes in the way it functions and maintains contact with the school's old boys. Critical to this has been the Headmaster's initiative to recruit a full-time Director of Development and I am pleased to announce that in the autumn Isabella Eastham was appointed to the role. Isabella took up her post in November and she will be a valuable asset to the RGS and the OWs' Club. As part of her early work, you will be receiving a questionnaire seeking your views of how we communicate with you in the future. I would urge you all to complete [the questionnaire](#).

In addition, the school has also been developing - with OW, Simon Noakes - a new website, which will be launched soon. As part of this, you will be able to view a copy of the Wycombiensian, which provides a full update of activities that have been taking place at the school. [View it here](#).

This year's OWs' dinner will take place in the Queen's Hall on Saturday 8th May and the guest of honour will be Ian Wilson, who taught at the RGs between 1972 and 2008. It would be great to see as many of you there as possible. If you want to see full details and download an application form, please [CLICK HERE](#)

I would also like to draw your attention to the range of RGS and OW merchandise that is on offer. Details can be [found here](#).

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 2010.

Yours sincerely



**Simon Molden (1989-95)**

## **HEADMASTER'S REPORT**

Dear Old Wycombiensian

Since my last letter in 2009, we have had a year of great progress in nearly every aspect of school life. Most recently our U16 hockey team have reached the National Indoor finals, a feat last achieved by a state school in 1996. We qualified unbeaten and I will be attending the finals in Nottingham when of course we all hope for a successful conclusion against Whitgift School, Croydon. On the rugby field, both the U15s and the U18s are through to the quarter finals of the Daily Mail Cup. We are waiting to hear who our opponents will be.

The RGS Close Harmony group won the £1000 grand prize in the Eden Choir Competition, voted for by members of the public. You can see a video clip of their outstanding performance in the school news archive at [www.rgshw.com](http://www.rgshw.com). At the recent State Boarding Schools' Conference, held at RGS, the Close Harmony Group entertained over 100 heads and housemasters and enthralled them with their singing.

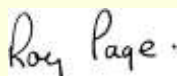
A delegation of head teachers from Beijing arrived at the school in December to observe our teaching and facilities. I am pleased to say they were greatly impressed with all aspects of the school and both parties enjoyed the opportunity to exchange experiences.

Outside of daily school life, RGS continues to feature prominently. Two OWs serving in the forces were brought to our attention this year: Xavier Griffin received a Military Cross for his bravery in Afghanistan, whilst Major Jody Davies was awarded an MBE for his services in Helmand province with the Royal Gurkha Rifles. This is a great achievement for them both. Those of you with a keen eye for motoring journalism will have noted the appearance of RGS on BBC's Top Gear, filmed in May. Boys and staff alike were equally excited about the day's filming, although perhaps with less enthusiasm for the vehicles that were brought along for the episode.

The annual OW dinner will be on Saturday 8 May 2010 when the guest speaker will be Ian Wilson, who many of you will remember for his teaching of classics and his interest and involvement in so many extra-curricular activities, not to mention his Geordie wit! For OWs who have not attended before, I wholeheartedly recommend the event to you as one of the highlights of the school year, not just as an opportunity to reconnect with old friends but as a chance to revisit the school and see the changes we have made and are planning to make. You may like to take the opportunity to purchase some RGS memorabilia which will be available on the night. I look forward to seeing you at the dinner.

Our 'Shaping Our Destiny' campaign to build and refurbish maths, gym and changing room facilities for the boys has raised enough funds to begin building work this summer. As you know, our original plans have had to have been remodelled to correspond with certain areas of the school being 'listed', but I am certain you will find that the new facilities will be a credit to the school and we are aiming to have some completed before September. We are some way off our £1.3million target but are making steady progress. If you would like to support RGS, please do get in contact with us.

You may have read from my previous correspondence or online that we appointed our first Director of Development, Isabella Eastham, this school year. Her role is to source strategic future funding for the school and to be a point of contact for old boys and all other members of the RGS community. You are very welcome to contact her by emailing [ime@rgshw.com](mailto:ime@rgshw.com) or by visiting the school. We are, as always, delighted to offer OWs tours of the school and whilst you do not have to book, you can ring the Development Office on 01494551428 if you wish to visit a particular area or meet with members of staff.



Roy Page Headmaster

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

Dear Old Wycombiensian e-mail: [chris.andrew@besfordgroup.com](mailto:chris.andrew@besfordgroup.com)

The changes in communication referred to in last year's note are progressing and we are now looking to contact as many old boys as possible through Friends Reunited and Facebook. Terry Williams and Martin Berry have been very successful in identifying OWs through the former and, so far, has covered it for leavers for all years except 1983-1990. We shall also be seeking to make contact through Facebook and in other ways. Our thanks go to them for their time and effort committed to this. The impending arrival of the Development Director will create opportunities for the club to become more integrated with the school and we look forward to receiving the new appointee's views on how this can be achieved.

As well as combining efforts with Terry Williams and Martin Berry (who runs the website), Ian Clark continues to control the database of members, including producing the newsletters for the website and regular emails. Please, therefore, continue to contact Ian with any change of address or contact details and letters or information for posting on the website. Ian's contact details are:

5, Foxhill Close, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP13 5BL Tel: 01494 530782

Email: [ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk)

I must extend my appreciation of Ian's continuing contribution to the club.

The OW website 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 contact by email
- 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 and I would encourage you to come along this year on Saturday 8th May 2010. It 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 2010.

**Chris Andrew** (1959-1967)

Dear Old Wycombiensian e-mail: [robin@dorkings.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:robin@dorkings.fsnet.co.uk)

As you will read elsewhere, the 2010 **Old Wycombiensians' Dinner** will be on Saturday 8th May. Do put the date in your diary.

We now have the e-mail addresses of about 1,900 OWs and have recently sent an e-mail to them with some news of OW activities and also the RGS. If you did not receive it and would like to receive an e-mail from us about four times a year, please send your email address to Ian Clark ([ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk)). If you are in contact with fellow OWs, please pass the word on. It is great that the number of OWs who are sending in their e-mail addresses has increased considerably in the last six months.

A number of OWs have in recent years asked about former or indeed present teachers, and, through Ian Clark, we have on a number of occasions been able to put them in touch with the teacher concerned. Ian is still in

touch with quite a few, so please do not hesitate to contact him on this.

I have recently received a book written by **John Comer**, who was at the RGS from 1954-61. It is a fascinating account of his life at the RGS and Buckinghamshire in his teenage years. A number of masters' names and boys are mentioned, so, if you are a certain age you may find your name appearing.

**Phil Doyle**, who left in **1988**, wants to have a reunion of his contemporaries, and he has found his enthusiasm matched by those he has contacted. Others have also expressed a desire to host meetings of OWs. If you would like to have a reunion at the RGS at some stage, please contact Ian, and he may be able to help you make contact with your contemporaries and advertise the event.

**Best wishes for 2010.**

**Robin Dorkings (1957-63)**

## **From the Development Office**

January 2010

Dear Old Wycombiensian

You may have read in previous newsletters that RGS has decided to move forward with a permanent Development function to ensure the long-term future of the school, not just in a financial capacity, but in terms of furthering relationships with our alumni, the local community and beyond. It is with this wide remit that I joined the RGS at the end of November 2009 as Director of Development, having previously worked in two separate Development Offices in Cambridge schools.

The Shaping Our Destiny campaign has reached a point where, although we have not fully reached our target, it is now possible to begin building work and I hope to extend an invitation to the OW community to view the new plans and meet with those who are working so hard to make the campaign's vision a reality later in the Summer Term. I am conscious that the campaign has strong OW support, for which I would like to offer my thanks and hope that your support will remain as RGS continues to grow and thrive. The school stands today as your legacy and the boys who now sit at your desks, in your old classrooms, know they have a proud history to uphold.

Part of my job is to coax the younger leavers in particular to remember RGS as they proceed into their new lives after school. Our alumni network reaches across the globe and I am conscious that school days have a tendency to appear very distant when one has left, even just a few years previously. If you know or hear of an OW abroad, encourage them to get in contact – the news we receive from our alumni on their travels is always read with great interest by staff and current pupils alike.

I am continually delighted by the warm welcome I have been given from the RGS community and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at OW events throughout the year, including the annual dinner in May. If you would like to drop in to visit the school, it would be a pleasure to receive you. I can be contacted by emailing [ime@rgshw.com](mailto:ime@rgshw.com) or by calling 01494 551428.

With warm regards, **Isabella Eastham**

Director of Development

## **EXTRACTS FROM THE MAGAZINE**

### **THE BEST DAYS OF YOUR LIFE??**

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

**Meeting held on Wednesday, October 18th 1931**

H.G.Tidy (Senior Prefect) and nine prefects were present.

Barnard (ii) was brought up by Cavey for failure to do lines set some fortnight previously for bad conduct. The only attempt which he had made to do them was a few lines in pencil. He therefore received three strokes in order to teach him that lines must be done promptly.

Gomm was also brought up by Cavey for the same offence. His case was not so serious as more attempt had been made to complete the work set and this was his first appearance before the prefects. It was decided that fifty lines should be given to be completed by the following day.

**H.G.Tidy** Senior Prefect

#### **Meeting held on June 31st (?) 1932**

Most of the prefects were present.

Mugliston was brought up by Harris for failure to do lines, his crime culminating in a display of bad manners while assembling for prayers.

It was discovered that he had given considerable trouble to several other prefects and as this was his second appearance before the prefects it was decided that three strokes should be administered.

Redgate, Justice and Bolton were brought up by Ives for ragging on their way home from school as they were going down Amersham Hill. This was considered serious as it would bring discredit on upon the school. The worst offenders, Bolton and Redgate, were given three strokes, while Justice received two.

**H.G.Tidy** Senior Prefect

#### **Meeting held on Wednesday, October 26th 1932**

The Senior Prefect and 12 prefects were present

Saunders (C.J.) was brought before the Prefects by F.R.Kay for general misbehaviour. Some days before the meeting, Saunders was told to copy a passage from "The Master of Ballantrae" - actually 34 lines of print. He refused to do this and stated that he would prefer to be caned.

His wish was complied with, but after the first stroke, he wished the punishment be commuted to the original number of lines, but it was decided that the caning should be proceeded with.

Three strokes were administered in all.

**J.A.Harris** Senior Prefect

#### **Meeting held on Thursday, November 24th 1932**

The Senior Prefect and 9 prefects were present

Cochrane was brought before the Prefects by H.J.Cavey for failing to do 30 lines which were set 9 days previously.

The original offence was that instead of joining in the regular school games, as he should have been, Cochrane persisted in playing about and generally making a nuisance of himself. 30 lines were set, but they were produced in very bad writing and actually consisted of 20 lines. 30 more lines were set, but they were not done.

As Cochrane was a new boy and quite young, it was decided that he should be given 50 lines to do and show them to the Senior Prefect on November 25th 1932.

**J.A.Harris** Senior Prefect

**Ed: Were there Prefect Meetings in your time? Could they use the cane? Have you any memories?**

## **OLD WYCOMBIENSIANS' SPORTING REUNIONS, AGM AND ANNUAL DINNER**

**Saturday 8th May 2009**

From 2.30 p.m. Hockey match. 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 Ian Wilson, who taught at RGS from 1972 to 2008 and was for many years a junior form master and master in charge of cross-country.

The Headmaster, Roy Page, who will have taught many of you over the last 35 years, will talk about the RGS present and future.

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](mailto: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 Simon Molden soon as possible, and by Tuesday 27th April at the very latest. You will receive the confirmation of your application and the Agenda of the AGM, by email or by letter but not before 1st April. If you would like a reply through the post, please send a SAE with your application.

Apart from the hockey on May 8th, we are arranging golf, and cricket 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 and cricket ([david.stone5@ntlworld.com](mailto:david.stone5@ntlworld.com)), and Ian Clark ([ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk)) for golf

We look forward to seeing you on 8th May.

**Simon Molden** Chairman

## **OW RUGBY**

The OW Rugby match and Reunion that should have been played on Dec. 18th, but was postponed because of the snow, will now be played on Thursday April 1st. Plenty of players were keen to play then, but if you did want to play, and the organizers do not have your name, please contact [ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk) Do come along and watch!

## **OW INTERNATIONALS**

A few years ago, Alan Yeates, who has taught at the RGS for 28 years, drew up a provisional list of OWs who have represented their country at sport. The intention is to have an International Honours Board at the RGS. Before it is unveiled, it is important to get all the details right with no errors and no omissions. Could you please have a look at the list below, to see if you can spot any mistakes, and tell me at [ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk).

Ronald Syrett

Rugby

1942-47 England

John Woodward (Ted)	Rugby	1944-49	England
Otto Decker	Soccer	1948-50	USA
Anthony Redrup	Athletics	1947-51	
Geoff Baker	Rowing	1949-53	England
Clive Ashby	Rugby	1950-54	England
Alan Brinn	Rugby	1956-59	England
Mike Pattinson	Full Bore Rifle Shooting	1953-60	England
Les Macready	Hockey	1955-62	Scotland
John Saunders	Chess	1963-70	Wales
Richard Staynor	Hockey	1965-71	Great Britain
David Cheesewright	Orienteering	1974-80	
Philip Newport	Cricket	1975-81	England
Martin Gillingham	Athletics	1976-82	Great Britain
Simon Aspinall	Fencing	1982-6	England & GB
Danny Sapsford	Tennis	1985-87	Great Britain
Nick Beal	Rugby	1983-89	England and British Lions
Matthew Cunningham	Basketball	1984-89	England
Scott Ashdown	Hockey	1984-90	England
Andrew Richardson	Tennis	1988-90	Great Britain
Barry Cowan	Tennis	1988-90	Great Britain
Matthew Dawson	Rugby	1985-91	England and British Lions
Martin Cartledge	Softball	1985-91	Great Britain
Miles Maclagan	Tennis	1988-91	Great Britain
Jonathan Wyatt	Hockey	1987-91	England and Great Britain
Luke Donald	Golf	1990-96	Great Britain and Europe
Tim Gardner	Cross Country	1991-97	Wales
Ross Brewer	Gymnastics	1992-98	England
Ross Muir	Kendo	1992-98	
Nick Duncombe	Rugby	1994-2000	England
Paul Bentley	Clay Pigeon Shooting		Great Britain

## **SAD NEWS**

Robert William Harding has died peacefully, aged 91. He attended the RGS, where he was in the rugby and athletics teams, before he went into the Metropolitan Police Force in 1938.

Robert was a Wellington pilot for the RAF Bomber Command during World War Two. He wrote a book about his experiences as a prisoner of war. He retrained as a teacher in 1947 and went on to become Headteacher at five Primary Schools before retiring from Westhaven Junior School in Dorset.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his family and close friends.

## **EMAILS/LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

### **John Saunders writes:**

I was extremely sorry to read in the December 2009 OW Newsletter that Peter Richards had died recently.

I recall that he was head boy at the school in my time but didn't know personally whilst at school. I first came in direct contact with Peter in 2003 when I wrote a letter to CAM Magazine and he was the editor. He published it and we engaged in an email dialogue during which I twigged the fact that he was the same Peter Richards who had been a couple of years older than me at the RGS. I revealed to him that he appeared in the 1967 School Photo that I had put up on my website. Luckily, he forgave me for "revealing the dreadful apparition of me in 1960s specs -- something I hoped time had expunged". He also very kindly commissioned an article from me

about 'Chess in Cambridge'.

The Times obituary mentions the following: *Richards took upon himself the brunt of the editorial work, writing extensively for CAM's pages and handling all the copy. Contributors, who included both academics and journalists, were often given acres of space, which helped to make up for the fact that, thanks to his fierce quality control, he might substantially rewrite their work. Contributors were sometimes surprised to see that articles, far from being cut, turned out to be longer than when originally submitted.* I can corroborate that in almost every detail. If you read my CAM article, linked to above, the first two paragraphs are almost entirely down to Peter's own research and writing, and he helped greatly with the rest of the article. It was my first collaboration in many years with a fellow OW and an extremely enjoyable one.

Re The Times obituary: did anyone else notice that photographs of two OWs appear on the page? One is Peter, of course, but one of the newspaper's internal advertisements, to a page about Victoria and George Cross winners, coincidentally shows a picture of Ian Fraser, VC, one of the RGS's two VC winners.

**Dear Ian,**

I've had a recent enquiry from Albert Leeser (1939 - 1947) as to the existence of any Grey Books from 1940 to 1945. These haven't been uncovered on Tony Hare's website. Maybe you could circulate this request in your next newsletter please.

**Brian Ransley**

**Ed. Can anyone help?**

**Dear Ian**

Have of late been looking thro' some old photos and came upon this one of "Jock" Evely. He was one of the maths masters during my period at the RGS. He did his best to teach us, but seemed to command very little authority and came in for a lot of stick from the pupils.



As I recall, some wag had a miniature "spy" type camera and was selling these photos off, probably for about one shilling each (5 pence) at the time. I expect there may even be similar candid type photos of other masters buried deep in old photograph boxes of the past. I think that this photo is probably around 1955-6. I wasn't quite

sure as to whom or where to send it, but thought that you might find a suitable destination for it in the Old Boys archives.

Poor old soul, even as he left the school at the end of the day at 4 o'clock, on his bicycle towards Hazlemere, he was still being pursued with cat calls of "Jock, Jock, Jock" by the pupils waiting at the bus stop for the 362 London Transport bus for Amersham.

Please feel free to use it and the reminiscences as you will. I don't suppose that after fifty years or more there should be any problems.

If I remember correctly, Jock also was the custodian of the "lost property office", a small cubby-hole of a room beneath the stairs, opposite to the Masters Common Room, that went up to the laboratories. He would sell-off any unclaimed items at the end of each term for a few pence, but that's another story!

Happy Days (well, most of the time.)

Always interested to see school news of the past.

With best wishes, **Ian Butson**. (RGS 1953-1959)

**Dear Ian,**

By chance, I was in Wycombe this Sept and found out the Wasps played at the soccer ground, so my wife and I went to see them.

I never myself played rugby at RGS, but was captain of the B team at Finchley in 1974 and got as far as the second team at Rosslyn Park in 1977. In New York I was president of the Saranac Lake rugby club [1982-86] and organized the largest tournament in the world each summer [105 teams]. It still is going strong today.

**Ian Orme**

University Distinguished Professor, Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Pathology, Colorado State University

**Hi Ian**

I expect you have been appraised by this time, but Ian Hancock is/was Head of Chemistry/Science at Aylesbury Grammar School.

Strickland left way back in the 1960's to take up a position in Bristol, not that that info will help much, except that I believe it was at an independent school.

Best wishes for the season **Andrew MacTavish**

**Dear Ian**

Thanks for the email. I had a very pleasant surprise earlier this term whilst coaching my U14 football team at Hampton. A rugby match was taking place behind me and I noticed a familiar style of sock. It was indeed the RGS 2nd XV mashing Hampton! The 1sts won too. I had a nice chat to the 2 masters at tea after and chatted to a few boys. Not sure that I like the lurid green prefect ties!

**Peter Price** (1976-1982)

**Dear Ian**

Nothing very startling about Reggie (Howard). I used to help him on the camping holidays he organised for the boarders scout pack he ran. They could be fairly hair raising affairs. I remember one at Salcombe. We all traveled down to Kingsbridge by train and then by hired lorry to the camp site. Quite a few free spirits were involved who used to sneak off at midnight for midnight swims, after spending a few illicit hours in a local pub.

My self appointed job was to keep a bit of an eye on the chaos to avoid Reggie having a heart attack. As you know, he had had rheumatic fever in early life which limited him somewhat. Other memories include him teaching Gary Bristow myself and someone whose name I cannot bring back to play bridge, thus putting us in a different league to the solo and pontoon players who infested the prefects' old room next to the gym. He talked a fair bit about the time he spent in Turkey teaching English to the local youths, and I got the impression that he was not overly impressed by Islam. All in all a thoroughly kind, likeable guy and a first class teacher to boot.

**Peter Hall**

**Ian**

As one who played hockey with David Wiltshire and even partnered him at tennis against the school a tidy few years ago, I appreciated his December letter.

Going back even further, can anyone remember digging for victory? One morning, under GAG's control, a whole form was provided with digging forks and told to dig, roughly where the staff room is now. We gave up the struggle against stony ground without ever planting anything..

I was a classmate of Rex A.Davis from form II in 1939 until he left from VS in 1944, and remember his quiet presence.

As for myself, at 80 I enjoy serene serendipity, pondering over fond memories and multitudinous coincidences.

Joy to all, **A.M.E.Leeser**

**Dear Ian**

A contemporary of mine at the RGS, John Bedford-James, has told me about the reunion dinner on 8 May, as a result of which I have looked up the website and would like to find out more.

I went to the school in the autumn of 1949, and recall the imposing figure of Mr Tucker, the headmaster, looking down at us from the stage. Reading out the names of new boys in alphabetical order, he eventually reached mine and, when I answered 'here, sir', looked straight at me and said 'You'll do well here, boy'.

It took some time for me to work out that the school was run by the

Taffia, with staff such as: Sam Morgan (Deputy Head); PL Jones (Head of Maths); Emlyn Jones (Head of French); Mervyn Davies (Head of German, and no doubt others whom I've forgotten., So someone with not one but two Welsh names was laughing.

I did my O levels at the age of 14, and found myself staying three years and a term in the 6th form, since they wouldn't let me take the Cambridge entrance exams early. These included a Latin unseen translation, which meant that I had to take one Latin lesson each week with Mr Tucker. And since he used the same texts, asked the same questions and made the same jokes each year, I became quite alarmingly familiar with all of them.

I recall his saying, 'the verb fero, ferre, tuli, latum' has gone into French in just one set expression, but I can't expect any of you to know it'. 'Would it by chance', I modestly wondered, 'be the phrase "sans coup ferir", "without striking a blow"?'

'Goodness me! Excellent, excellent, boy," he would say. And the same when he asked what 'a tonsorial artist' was. 'Would that be a barber, by any chance?' I asked. 'Goodness me .. etc etc'

The good news was that, in the autumn of 1956 when I went to Cambridge for the entrance exams, I was delighted to discover that the 'unseen' translation from Latin was a passage from Caesar's 'De Bello Gallico', which I had already translated three, or possibly four, times into English.

'Building ramparts ... digging latrines ... massacring natives ... writing postcards home ...'; I had the whole things written down in 10 minutes flat and walked out 50 minutes before the allotted time. Yes!

Best wishes, **Michael Vaughan-Rees** (1948-1956)

## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

Congratulations to Fergus Walsh, ((1974-1980), who has been awarded a Honorary Doctorate in Civil Law at Newcastle University.

## **NEWS OF FORMER COLLEAGUE**

Erik Westrup, who taught PE, Games and Geog from 1969 -1971, came over to the UK from Australia for a short holiday. It was good to meet him and show him round the School. For those who may remember him, here is a recent photo:



He also sent a photograph of a Staff v Boys Rugby. Can you recognize any of the other staff?



**Ed. Were there Staff v Boys Rugby matches in your time? Do you have any memories of the matches?**

**Howard Sharp** has sent in this photograph of 4EP from 1979 with their Form Master, John Perfect. Many thanks!



A higher resolution copy is available [here](#)

Howard also supplied two school photographs which are available below. Beware they are large files; about 10Mb each!

[RGS May 1978 lower school](#)

[RGS May 1982 senior school](#)

## **CANCER RESEARCH**

After a recent family incident related to cancer, two Old Wycombiensians, Tom Slade (2009) and Tom Forber (2008), are taking part in the 3 Peaks Challenge in May this year to raise funds for Cancer Research UK. The challenge consists of climbing the three highest peaks in the UK within 24 hours: Scafell Pike, Mount Snowdon and Ben Nevis. They are also organising a series of golf days, dinner parties and a charity auction. If you would like to help or get in contact with them, please visit their Justgiving page at <http://www.justgiving.com/just-toms>

To aid their efforts, the school will be holding a Benevolent Fund appeal and assembly for their challenge in May.

## **NEWS FROM THE RGS**

**[YEAR 12 - TOULOUSE 2009](#)**



Y12 students recently carried out an impressive array of work experience placements at schools, a software company, pizzeria, bakeries, physiotherapists and a sports centre, in and around Toulouse, France, as part of the Year 12 European Work Experience programme.

We share here a selection of quotes from their feedback forms. We asked: What new skills did you learn from the placement? They said:

- I learnt to work effectively with children and how to communicate clearly so that they could understand.
- I learnt about the process of selling houses and the accounting and finance behind it.
- I learnt how to make a pizza!
- I learnt more colloquial French.
- I learnt what the French think of the English!
- I learnt lots of cooking skills, teamwork skills and restaurant service etiquette.
- I learnt how to make baguettes - French style!
- I learnt much aviation French and it improved my conversational French too.

**ED: Were there opportunities like this when you were at the RGS?**

## **RGS UNDER SNOW - FRIDAY 8th JANUARY**

Peter Glendining and William Marshall donned suitable gear and went to find out ...



School House



View across to the Cricket Pavilion. Cricket anyone?



Picnic Area next to the Science Block - picnic anyone?



The Boarding House



The Main Building



The Quad: Nothing in the school rules forbidding snowmobiles

**Ed: Do these pictures of the School buildings bring back memories and fill you with a touch of nostalgia?**

## SNOW CLEARANCE AT RGS - JANUARY 10th 2010



On Sunday 10th January a group of parents, staff and boys gathered at the RGS to clear the large amount of snow from around the site to get school back up and running on Monday morning. Bearing shovels, spades, snow-scoops, brooms and a mini-digger, the team set to work, and a few hours later, pathways around the site had been cleared. Around the Old Gym Block

**Ed. When there was there snow, did you and your parents come in to clear it?**

### NEXT NEWSLETTER

**This will be published on May 20th.**

Please send in your contribution, your memories, and your photographs to me, Ian Clark [ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ianrclarkuk@yahoo.co.uk) or post it to 5, Foxhill Close, High Wycombe, HP13 5BL. Ian edits the Newsletter; Martin Berry ensures that it appears on the website.