

# THE OLD REDINGENSIAN

Autumn 2008



The Arms of the Borough of Reading

# Contents of The Old Redingensian

## Autumn 2008

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### Feature Writers in this Issue

are G M (Martin) Murphy OR (1941-45) who has contributed ***Big Wigs and Nabobs*** and W E (Will) Lunn OR (1951-58) who describes ***An Expedition to Finnish Lapland***.

*Will is pictured below:*



# The President's Letter

**In the words of the Chinese proverb, we are unfortunate to live in interesting times. The recent turmoil in the world's financial markets brought an abrupt and apparently final end to an unusually long period of prosperity and trade expansion. History will tell us if this is indeed the cataclysm feared by the gloomier commentators.**

Meanwhile and by contrast, Reading School and its Old Redingensians' Association continue to flourish. A vintage crop of leavers went off to their universities or gap years, having earned extraordinarily good academic results as well as sporting and cultural achievements. During the summer holidays a large group of boys and Staff visited the West Indies on a cricket tour in Grenada, while both the OR vs School match and the OR Cricket week were held in decent weather despite the grim summer overall.

At the beginning of the new School year the OR 7-a-side Rugby tournament was again held on the School Field, with a record eight teams taking part in some energetic and fun-filled competition. Special thanks to the Parents' Association for providing a bar and barbecue throughout the day.

Indoors, the annual Sussex Luncheon was held by the riverside near Arundel, in glorious sunshine, on 26th April. A full house of ORs and their partners were joined by the Principal John Weeds and his wife Sarah, and all were glad to hear his upbeat appraisal of the School's situation.

During the year, Big School has been much enhanced by the hanging of new wall plaques, celebrating more distinguished ORs. The craftsmen have cleverly matched the Victorian originals in colour and sign-writing style, and the programme will continue with further plaques planned for next year.

In October, the regular Question Time was held, with an audience of some 40 senior boys, shooting topical questions at a panel of ORs from varied professional backgrounds.

The Annual OR Remembrance Service will be held in the School Chapel on Sunday 9th November at 10.30 am, while the Annual General Meeting and Dinner of the OR Association will be held at Sonning Golf Club from 4.30 pm on Saturday 22nd November. Peter Fiddick OR (1951-57), the distinguished journalist and media critic, will be the guest speaker.

During a busy year for the School and the OR Council, two disappointments must be acknowledged. Firstly, progress with the upgrading of the ORA website has

been slower than planned, and this important facility will not be ready for a while longer.

Secondly, and of great importance, the Reading School stakeholder forum has not yet been able to agree on a plan for the launch of the fund-raising appeal. School staff, Parents, ORs, Governors, and the Reading Foundation all see the clear need for improvements to the School's built assets, starting with the badly-needed Refectory; but for various reasons the necessary vigorous drive for funds has not yet materialised.

Perhaps one reason is the apparent absence of really wealthy men among the former pupils (and parents) – the type of men who can sign a huge cheque to start an Appeal.

Of course there are plenty of success stories among old boys, but there is an apparent dearth of big entrepreneurs, from which similar schools visibly benefit. Of approximately 6000 former pupils around 20% are members of the OR Association,

and hence feature in our records. Perhaps one of the unknown plutocrats will read this, and contact the Principal, John Weeds, to offer his support – here's hoping!

At all events, the fund-raising activity is a real and urgent task for all of us who would wish to see future generations of Reading School boys receive their excellent education in excellent premises. It would be unwise to rely on State funding for this purpose, as has been demonstrated by its evident shortage over many years past.

Altogether, my year of office as ORA President has been stimulating, and has confirmed my view that our Association depends heavily on the unstinting honorary work of a very few ORs. They are the spine of our Association, making things happen year after year. Congratulations and my warm thanks to them for their support in the last year.

At our AGM in November I shall propose that Neil Thomason OR should be elected President for the coming year. Neil has enjoyed a distinguished career in the finance markets of London and Hong Kong, and as Vice President has already made a welcome mark on the thinking of the Council. He has taken a special interest in the Enterprise Awards Scheme, to which he has made a handsome contribution, among other acts of generosity towards the School. All continued success to the OR Association, and Floreat Redingensis!

Cedric Scroggs



## Notes and News

After 15 years R G (Richard) Griffiths (1957-64) has stepped down as Senior Partner at Blandy & Blandy, the Thames Valley's oldest law firm. He joined the firm in 1964 and will continue as a partner, specialising in commercial property, and as a part time employment tribunal judge.

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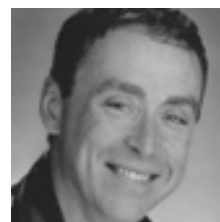
Lady Lowe, wife of Air Chief Marshal Sir Douglas Lowe GCB DFC AFC (Past President) died on 8 July and we extend our sympathy to the family.

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The drive at School has been resurfaced and given 'one-way' markings. Traffic must now only proceed up the drive and must leave the School by the Craven Road gate. A pedestrian walk-way has also been designated down the west side of the drive.

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*Zorro The Musical* opened at the Garrick Theatre in July to ecstatic reviews. It is directed by Christopher Renshaw (1963-70), pictured right, who is equally accomplished in the fields of opera and the musical theatre. He is the son of 'Willie' Renshaw master at School (1950-77) and when not bringing a show to the stage lives in Nicaragua.



In August Frank Terry, master at School (1946-82) announced his engagement to be married to Mrs Jean Moore of Shinfield. The Association send him their best wishes.

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The professional advice of W H (Bill) Montague (1971-77) of Dexter Montague & Partners, Solicitors, was sought by both TV and Radio, last August, on the emergent problem of house builders delaying construction. His firm advice to purchasers is to negotiate a long stop date to protect themselves under contract.

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R E (Ron) Atkins (1939-44), in a letter to the Reading Post recalled that his grandparents had a stick of incendiary bombs through their roof in Hemdean Road, Caversham, during the War. Co-incidentally that raid also put one through the roof of KCB's grandparents house in Priory Avenue. It ended up in the wardrobe of his Uncle, K J Greenslade, OR (1929-34) by then serving in the Army.

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Ron Atkins still lives in Tilehurst; his brother Geoff (G G Atkins 1941-47) is in Perth, Western Australia and his brother David (D L Atkins 1948-53) in Gunnislake, Cornwall.

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C C (Clifford) Payton (1960-66) is stepping down as Secretary of the Reading Old Boys Lodge after 8 years. G L (Graham ) Guppy's (1963-70) year as Master has now drawn to a close. The Lodge is always keen to hear from Old Redingensians interested in joining.

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News of J A E Greenfield , East Wing (1939-47) is sought by D A (David) Youens (1944-52). David thinks that Greenfield joined the Royal Navy and was posted to Rosyth but the rest is, currently, silence. Can someone break it?

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Sky HD showed, in September, a National Trust film from Batemans, pictured, in Sussex in which J W M (Mike) Smith PP (1937-47) spoke eloquently of Rudyard Kipling. The film was made 2 years ago and has been shown on Sky before but never on 'Free To View'. Mike also wrote the voiceover for Nigel Havers, who narrated.

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C J (Chris) Atkins (1973-80) is a commercial beekeeper and thus has experienced the decline in honey production in the last year of two that has been so serious. We should be interested in opinions from OR beekeepers on how the problems are, should, or could, be addressed.

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D R T Sherwill (1943-49) no longer has a photographic studio but remains actively involved with photography as a tutor for the Open College of the Arts, and the School of Photography.

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A J (Tony) Wright (1934-41) has regularly arranged visits to the UK from his home in Canada to fit in with the Annual Dinner. He did however, miss the 2007 function as he is currently employed as an education consultant in China and had to be in Shanghai last December – indeed he recognized the 3 teachers pictured on page 17 of the Autumn 2007 issue as he has worked with them in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province!

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Up the Royals! (Or still the Biscuitmen, perhaps, to many of us). D R (David) Downs (1952-59), Reading FC Historian, on the 10th anniversary of the Madejski Stadium recalled the move from Elm Park in a special Reading Chronicle supplement in August.

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In 2006 MO (Marek) Brooks (1990-97) – see “Where Are They Now?” married Rinrat Ajavanond in Bangkok. Reading School and Kendrick were well represented at the ceremony as the image below shows. Left to right, standing behind Marek and Rin, are;

Hannah Lever	(ex Kendrick)
R J (Richard) Walter	OR (1990-97)
R E (Robin) Gasiorowski	OR (1990-97)
A (Alastair) McDonald	OR (1990-97)
D E (Duncan) Lowe	OR (1990-97)
G D (Geoff) Hussey	OR (1990-97)
Sarah Burbedge	(ex Kendrick)



Hannah Lever has since married Richard Walter (Richard is the son of Tom Walter, former Geography master). Alastair McDonald is the son of Margaret McDonald, former Assistant Head.

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Many ORs will recall the Rev E G Levien, twenty years School Chaplain, and fourteen years House Master of West Wing (which he ran with the staunch help of his two sisters).

The Leviens were truly a Reading School family; his nephews J B Levien (1928-34), (Captain of Boarders and Vice Captain of the School) and RH Levien (1927-36) were both West Wingers and the latter's son R A Levien (1960-65) also, with J K Levien (1965-72) following in the tradition. Now J B (John) Levien's granddaughter, Rose, has recently swum the English Channel. Is this the closest connection the School has with a Channel swimmer, or do we have one amongst our former pupils?

After 10 hours Rose was six miles off the French coast battling with the ebb tide. The wind dropped as darkness fell and she neared the coast at Cape Gris Nez. She finally made landfall at 10.22 pm, under a full moon.

Rose's time was 13 hours 22 minutes – the first woman to swim the Channel, Gertrude Ederle, of New York, in 1926, took 14 and a half hours.

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Dr Anthony Addington, who lived from 1713-1790 (and who married in 1745, Mary Hiley, daughter of Haviland Hiley, Headmaster of Reading School), and his son, Henry Addington (1757-1844) who became Prime Minister, were the subject of an interesting talk on 17 September, by Dr Susan Arstall, of Reading Museum. The long running controversy about whether Henry went to Reading School was raised. The Hon. Archivist took the opportunity to remind those present that Dr Routh, who became President of Magdalen College, Oxford, was a contemporary of Henry; Routh was an OR himself and is reported in print as asserting that Henry was one also – which gives some credence to the oft disputed claim.

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The six part TV comedy *Beautiful People*, which started on BBC 2 in October, is based on the autobiography of S D Doonan OR (1969-71). Simon Doonan (left) became famed for avant garde window dressing displays (he started work with Heelas). He is now creative director of Barneys Department Store in New York and a columnist on the New York Observer.

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A K W (Abrar) Hussain (1996-03) has won the Roger Leyland Prize at the College of Law. The Prize is awarded by Herbert Smith LLP and is given to the top performing Asian or Black student.

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# Enterprise Awards 2008

Applications to the scheme this year were small in number, but very interesting. The awards were decided by a sub-committee consisting of (left to right)

Michael Maule, Past President

Tony Waring, Past President

Neil Thomason, Vice President



The Principal, Mr Weeds, was also consulted.

The result was that almost all applications received an award, calibrated according to the feat proposed and, to an extent, the quality of the application itself.

The budget for the year was £3,000, supplemented by a specific donation of another £3,000. Because of the limited number of applicants, this provided what was felt to be a very sizeable average award.

There were many applications by individuals for School expeditions, where the party as a whole was also applying to the ORA for sponsorship. During the year many Council members expressed the view that they were comfortable with a *“who dares wins”* type of approach (possibly better read as *“whoever makes an effort to apply may well deserve a reward”* in this case) and that all such applications should be considered. However the sponsoring of a group as a whole does not come under the Enterprise Award remit or budget. Such groups need to apply outside this scheme if they wish to seek ORA Council funding.

The scheme for 2009 will follow a similar format to that of 2008:

1. A series of awareness events in Chapel, perhaps just before Lent half term
2. Posters to advertise the programme
3. A request to Tutors to mention the programme
4. Online applications to be due around Easter
5. Awards to be determined by the end of April.

For 2009 the OR Council has increased their grant to £3,500; with a further generous individual donation of £3,000, the total budget, to provide the awards and meet advertising costs, will be £6,500.

We print opposite a letter from 2007 Award Winner, Jonathan Riley, then of Year 10, who is shown below, in the children's home he writes about:



“Last year, I wrote to you with a request for an Award for an expedition to Ethiopia in the spring of 2008, where I would be able to see a totally different culture, broaden my horizons, and donate toys and games to an orphanage. Extremely generously, the Old Redingensians donated a cheque totalling £250 to me in order to fund parts of my voyage on the condition that I wrote back with photographic proof.

I am now very pleased to say that I have returned from my journey and am writing this letter, not only as proof that I went with the attached photographs, but as a means of expressing my deep gratitude to the Old Redingensians for financing a large part of the trip.

Whilst in Ethiopia, I was lucky enough to travel a lot and see beautiful lakes in the south, world famous rock-hewn churches in the north and the magnificence of the capital city itself, Addis Ababa. Furthermore, I took with me an entire suitcase of toys to donate to a children's home, which I visited, and a large orphanage. And my family had collected many more toys and games from kind donors that couldn't come with me to Ethiopia due to weight so we freighted them out and have just received news of their arrival.

It was a very fulfilling voyage, and I am very pleased to have gone. The interesting country is full of misconceptions; many perceive it as an arid desert but there were many natural lakes, as well as regions of desolate acacia shrubs. Of course, it is not a rich country and so I am satisfied that I helped a community by donating things so that children with nothing could have something.

Once again, thank you so much for your munificence in funding my Ethiopian expedition.”



*Jonathan Riley in Ethiopia – see above*



*Trekking in Mongolia – see below*

We cannot yet print the report of 2007 major award winner, Oliver Jest, and the major award winner for 2008, Christopher Wells has yet to complete his project. All award winners are obligated to submit reports for which we can only provide limited space.

A particularly detailed report was received from Dominic Burrell, who was given a £250 grant in 2008 towards his place with an expedition to Mongolia to work in an orphanage. We give below some extracts and congratulate Dominic on his excellent submission, which has been circulated to all members of the Old Redingensians Association Council.

*‘ - the money you gave me was a huge help in getting to Mongolia and I feel that the expedition has changed me for the better as a person – Old met new, Communist met Capitalist, East met West, and Buddhism met Shamanism on the streets of Ulan Bator - the Mongol culture in the past did not encourage scholarship so much as swordsmanship - nine gigantic golden statues of Buddha in various incarnations - ....Lake Huvsgul.. ..contains 2 per cent of the world's fresh water -.... - the boiled sheep innards.... is almost enough to put you off haggis for life – bringing the Reading School Head of Technology with us turned out to be a good move – we had really pulled together with all the team spirit we could muster- a bus that made me feel like a sardine in a tin –....I gained...vital life skills in budgeting, organisation, leadership....in one of the most natural and untouched environments left on earth...’*

Dominic and the team completed their objectives and he highly recommends such expeditions to those with a sense of adventure who want to learn more about themselves and other cultures at the same time.

# Big Wigs and Nabobs

By Martin Murphy



*The Coat of Arms of the  
East India Company 1730*

Little is known about life at Reading School in the years before the advent of Dr Valpy, but a document survives in Reading Public Library which provides a glimpse of how things were. It is a printed copy of the Latin verses composed and recited by three pupils - Joseph Gill, George Cobb Blagrove and Henry Vansittart - at the Visitation of 1767, during the headmastership of John Spicer. Young Gill is listed as *gen. fil.* (son of a gentleman), while the other two appear as *arm. fil.* (sons of gentlemen entitled to a coat of arms) - evidence of the importance then attached to social class within the School. The Blagroves and the Vansittarts were top people in contemporary Reading, and it is no accident that their sons were given prominence at what was a prestige social event, attended by town councillors, clergy and local worthies. The Blagroves of Bulmershe Court and Southcote Lodge had a long history of involvement in Reading politics. The Vansittarts, a family of Dutch origin, were more recent arrivals who had made their fortune in

trade with Russia and India. Henry Vansittart senior (1732-1770), father of the Latin poet, is said to have attended Reading School before going on to Winchester College, but he must have been extremely young if that is so, because he was sent out to India at the age of 13 to be apprenticed to the East India Company. It was the beginning of a meteoric career which culminated in his appointment as Governor of Bengal in 1759, at the age of 27. It was a crucial moment, two years after Clive's victory over the French at Plassey established British supremacy in India. Vansittart was a close associate of Clive and Warren Hastings, but his policy of conciliation with the Mughals made him enemies within the Company, and in 1764 he resigned his office and returned to England to defend his policies. With the money he had made in India he bought a country estate, and in March 1768 (the year after his son's performance at the School Visitation) he got himself elected MP for Reading. He also acquired the site of Reading Abbey (sub-let to the Blagroves), and thus became the School's neighbour as well as its most prestigious patron and parent.



*Henry Vansittart by  
S W Reynolds,  
after Joshua Reynolds*

It is probable that Henry senior covered the cost of printing the Latin verses, and that he was himself present at their recitation. To have an Indian Nabob sitting in the front row on that occasion must have made the Head Master purr with self-satisfaction. John Spicer was a man eager to raise the social status of the School. It was in his term of office, after all, that an Old Boys' Association was founded with the title 'The Gentlemen educated at Reading School'.

Young Vansittart, the star performer (only 14 years of age) was no mean Latinist – but of course Latin and (to a lesser extent, Greek) was the staple diet of the syllabus: there was no Science, no English literature, no Modern Languages, and subjects like Economics had yet to be invented. Evidently these annual recitations of Latin verse were normally variations on the theme of the School's history. Vansittart began by declaring that he had chosen a new subject. 'Headless monsters?', suggested young Gill, hopefully. 'Great British victories in India?', asked Blagrove. 'No', replied Vansittart: India had now been pacified, so that the merchant – 'loaded with the treasures of the east' (*gazis Orientis onustus*) – could now go about his business there in security. ('Loaded' was a fairly accurate description of Vansittart senior and his colleagues in the East India Company.) Well then, asked Blagrove, are the French planning an invasion? Wrong again, replied Vansittart: Britain rules the waves and thanks to Britain the world is at peace. No, what the country is facing is a more insidious threat from an older and more crafty enemy. Britons must be on the alert night and day to prevent artful agitators from surreptitiously entering the country. And who are they? Why, Jesuits!

The title of the verses is 'The Expulsion of the Brethren of the Society of Jesus from Spain' (*Fratres e Societate Jesu Hispania exterminati*). Earlier in 1767 six thousand Jesuits had been rounded up by the



Spanish authorities and deported to Corsica or Italy. It was a ruthless operation, motivated by fear and suspicion of Jesuit power and influence, and it followed similar expulsions from France and Portugal. However, the fact that this deportation happened in Spain, the birthplace of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, made it even more startling. But who could possibly have thought it a suitable subject for 14-year old Reading School boys who probably knew more about ancient history than about current affairs? One can only guess that the subject was chosen for them by their Headmaster, John Spicer, an ardent patriot. For as Vansittart's verses continue we begin to see the connection between the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain and the patriotic Protestant and Tory version of English history, in which Reading School played a minor part. The language Vansittart uses to describe the Jesuits is identical with the language used against them in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: they are poisonous snakes in the grass, chameleons, impostors, traitors, plotters, hypocrites and so on. 'Watch out!', Vansittart might have said, if he had been speaking English: 'If they should ever sneak into this country again, they will get up to their old tricks! Remember, remember the fifth of November: Gunpowder, Treason and Plot'.



*Ignatius Loyola*

Of course there was not the remotest possibility that the 18th century Jesuits who had been expelled from Spain would even contemplate seeking asylum in England. But the idea struck a powerful chord. Patriotic history needs its villains as well as its heroes, and Jesuits were the arch-villains of Vansittart's poem. 'O happy Britons!', he exclaims, 'freed from superstition, ignorance and the Popish yoke by King Henry VII (responsible for the refoundation of the School), and saved from the Spanish invader by his granddaughter Elizabeth!' But as he proceeds the young poet widens his target to include republicans, Calvinists, Methodists and 'fanatics' in general. He urges respect for the bishops of the Church of England, and for the 'unalterable order' of its religious establishment (*rerumque immobilis ordo sacrarum*). The invited audience of bigwigs would have liked what they heard, even if their Latin was a little rusty.

Sadly, young George Cobb Blagrove died later that year. In 1768 Henry Vansittart MP was sent back to India as a Commissioner charged with the task of investigating the affairs of the East India Company. His ship reached Capetown at the end of December, set out on the final stage of its voyage across the Indian Ocean – and was never seen again. Young Henry, his son, also went on to make his career in India, and distinguished himself as an expert in the Persian language. His struggles with Latin verse as a Reading Schoolboy may have helped him to become a linguist.

MM

*Southcote House*



*Bulmershe Court*



**Notes:**

1. There is a white marble tablet in the St John's Chancel at St Laurence's Church, Reading to John Spicer, Headmaster of Reading School.
2. Martin Murphy is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. Ed

## Events

### The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual OR Sussex Reunion Luncheon 26 April 2008

Another glorious Spring day saw ORs and their partners at the Boathouse, Amberley on the fourth Saturday of April. As has become traditional, Cedric Scroggs as current OR President took the chair and welcomed the 44 present. John Weeds, the Principal, gave an encouraging report on the state of the School. J W M (Mike) Smith PP, again organized the event – he and Audrey have a gift for creating the happiest and most relaxed of atmospheres, which is complemented by the ambience of this lovely venue, the cheerfulness and glamour of 'The Crew' who serve us, and delicious food.



*View from the deck of The Boathouse*



*A few words from The President*

Mike presented a copy of his new book '*Kipling's Sussex*' to the Principal for the School Library.

This is Mike's 12th successive year as organizer and our thanks go to him. It is also the 14th year at Amberley, following 3 years at Adversane (The Blacksmith's Arms) and the very first luncheon in the Spotted Cow, Angmering.



*Mike & Audrey Smith, John & Sarah Weeds  
Cedric & Trish Scroggs*



*The Principal receives a copy of Kipling's Sussex  
from the author*

The late R J (Dick) Wilder PP, initiated the event and ran it for its first 6 years. The 4th Lunch, in 1993, was the first to which ladies were invited – now it would be unthinkable not to do so, for this particular gathering is not just about the School. Dick's last year as organizer was also the first at the Boat House. Numbers have settled to between 40 and 50 and though variously referred to as 'The West Sussex Reunion' or 'The Annual Sussex Reunion', simply 'The Sussex Luncheon' does seem to say it all. Not to be missed!

KCB

## Question Time 7 October 2008

Once again the use of the 'Question Time' format proved successful in this now established annual event. The venue – always Big School since the inaugural occasion in 2003 – switched this year, most successfully to the Lecture Theatre, which provided the right ambience for 1½ hours of lively debate on a Tuesday morning.



An audience of 40+ Year 13 (7th form) boys asked thought provoking questions of the 6-strong panel chaired by Assistant Head, E S (Ned) Holt OR (1966-72). The panel consisted of C A Scroggs (1952-59) President, J Illman CMG (1951-59) PP, M H W Maule (1956-59) PP, N R Thomason (1966-73) Vice President, and K C Brown (1955-63) Hon Archivist.

Questions ranged from the likely future of British political parties, the effect of the media in the current financial crisis, and the need for regulatory control through to the likelihood of a repeat of the pattern of 1930's political extremism, the place of idealism in politicians, to the future of the National Health Service – and the future of Hull City Football Club!

KCB



### The Panel

*Clockwise from left: Cedric Scroggs,  
Ken Brown, Neil Thomason, Ned Holt,  
Michael Maule and John Illman*



## The Commemoration Service 10 October 2008



The new School Chaplain Mr C J Evans OR (1990-97) presided over a fine and moving service in which the music, under the aegis of the School's Director of Music, Mr Philip Aspden, FRCO, was, once again, of a very high standard. This year the fanfare which heralded the entrance of the Mayor (Councillor Peter Beard) and the clergy procession was composed by Philip Aspden.

Chris Evans welcomed the congregation and rendered the Bidding Prayer with meaning and resonance. Introductory flourishes before the start and the final verse of Vaughan Williams' arrangement of *All People that on Earth do Dwell* were uplifting, if a little dominant.

The Principal gave the first reading, from Deuteronomy (*A good land to be possessed*) and the congregation, which included the Vice Chairman of the School Governors, Mr I L Martin and the Chairman of the Foundation, Mr R P Huggins OR (1944-52), remained seated for the Anthem, *A Clare Benediction*, with words

and music by John Rutter, sung with great clarity and feeling by the School Choir, in which there has been a number of changes in composition from last year's equally excellent ensemble.

Cedric Scroggs, current President of the Old Redingensians Association, then gave a personal tribute from the lectern, which was both elegant and moving. He had arrived at School, in the era of post-war austerity and left in a time of consumer boom with the Beatles on the horizon. He was happy at School and still walks up the drive with pride and affection. The School had given him two gifts; one of peace which contrasted with an often turbulent home life, where due to the frequent illness of his mother and the need for his father to be often abroad on business, considerable demands sometimes devolved upon the children. The second gift was of responsibility; the School had taught him how to be self reliant and to use authority. (Cedric also recalled waiting to speak, nearly 50 years ago, as Captain of School, just as the current Captain of School, Joel Richardson, was now doing.)

Mr Evans led the prayers, a second hymn was sung and Joel Richardson duly delivered the second reading, resplendent with white carnation in his buttonhole and with his parents amongst the congregation.

The sermon was given by Father Jeremy Harris of All Saints, Maidenhead, who took *Faith* as his theme. His illustrations, delivered from the floor of the Church, were graphic and varied. In attempting to kindle the boys' interest in Archbishop Laud as being 'one of their own' he was unfortunate in talking of the furore caused by Laud's moving the altar from the east end to the centre of the church; in fact it was the opposite – Laud thought the altar must be set apart for its symbolism to be properly appreciated, not left in the middle of the congregation.

The Minster Church of St Mary the Virgin was filled with light throughout, illuminating the east window, the large flower displays, and the crucifix over the pulpit. After the third hymn the Reverend Canon Brian Shenton gave the blessing and the procession left the Church, accompanied on the organ by Mr Nicholas Woods FRCO.

OR guests included A R Waring, PP, D B Cox, Acting Hon Secretary, C J Widdows, Membership Secretary and K C Brown, Hon Archivist. A reception was held after the Service in Big School.

KCB



Canon Shenton



The Principal



Cedric Scroggs



The Mayor

# The New Commemorative Wall Plaques

Later this year the four additional plaques currently in preparation, commissioned from the School signwriter Brian Allum, will be hung in Big School. They will commemorate Bishop Christopher Butler, Sir George Pinker, the Boulting Brothers and John Minton. Each will feature in *Tracking the Tea Trays* in a future issue of this journal. Where they have been sponsored by individuals there will be an acknowledgment: others who may wish to sponsor a tea tray, at £100, are invited to contact the Hon Archivist – full details can be found on the rear cover of the journal.

## Tracking The Tea Trays No 6



William Conrad Costin's outstanding career was in embryo at Reading School where he was Captain, Victor Ludorum, and later a School Governor and President of the Old Redingensians Club. He took a first in history at St John's College, Oxford where he was successively Exhibitioner, Fellow, Senior Proctor and, ultimately, President, in the footsteps of William Laud. In the First World War he won the MC, in the Second World War worked in a key capacity at the Ministry of Supply.

'Punch' Cowan, another former President of the Old Redingensians Club, was a career soldier who fought in Burma during World War II longer than any other senior officer, commanding his Division with conspicuous success. Once the School XI wicket keeper, he became a hockey player of international standard, organized the winning Indian Olympic Games Teams in 1932 and 1936 and was Commandant of the Empire Village for the British and Empire Games in 1958. He served 10 years as a Deputy Lieutenant for Devonshire.

## Tracking The Tea Trays No 7



Next year a further four plaques will be inscribed – the blanks are ready and waiting. Front runners are:

**Judge Anthony Babington;** soldier, lawyer and author who overcame horrific wartime brain injury to render his country a lifetime of service

**Herman Lindars;** industrialist, inventor and musician of distinction

**'Tom' Dollery;** Warwickshire and England cricketer, the first professional to be appointed the regular captain of a first class county XI

**Owen Nares;** actor manager, a leading light on the English stage of the inter war years, who also made over 30 films between 1915 and 1943.

Additional nominations should be sent, please via Ken Brown or Chris Widdows – contact details are on the rear cover.

The image shows Ken reading out the names at the unveiling last April of the first four additional plaques hung in Big School – John Kendrick, Sir Alexander Galt, William Conrad Costin and Major General Cowan.



## OLD REDINGENSANS ASSOCIATION

## OUR MISSION

To maintain and develop an active and diverse association for the benefit of Old Redingensians and in support of the pupils and staff of Reading School.

## OUR AIMS

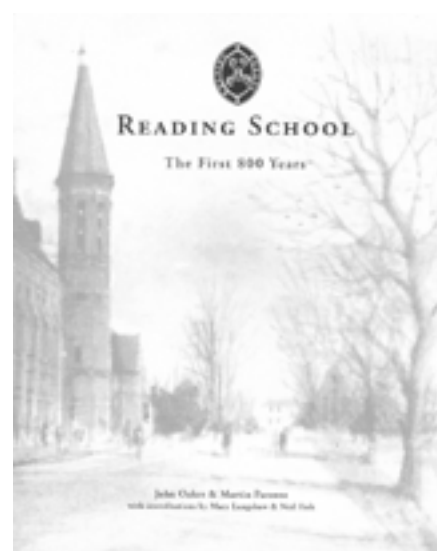
1. Through a clear reflection of the Social and Sporting needs of all age groups to encourage ORs to become more involved with social meetings, events and activities.
2. Whilst helping to maintain the School's heritage ensure a modern approach to all activities and communications ensuring younger age group participation.
3. Encourage adventurousness, creativity and leadership in pupils mainly through the support for overseas sporting tours and the Enterprise Awards initiative.
4. To actively maintain working links with the Principal, Staff, Governors, Reading Foundation, Parents & Friends of Reading School.
5. Ensure that all our transactions demonstrate financial and legal probity.

**This attractive softback, with 104pp and 70 illustrations (many in colour), by John Oakes and Martin Parsons, was first published in 2005.**

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From Membership Secretary:  
C. J. Widdows  
21 Bulmershe Road  
Reading RG1 5RH

Cheques payable to:  
Old Redingensians Association

# The Principal's Letter



**The view from my study is particularly promising at the moment – not least because the School looks so attractive in the benign autumnal weather we have been enjoying. In other ways too, the prospects look good. We have been blessed with another year of outstanding examination results and, on current trends, next year's performances should compare favourably. I am sure you will want to join me in wishing this year's Oxbridge candidates, currently preparing for interviews, all the best in their endeavours.**

Other prospects for the School look equally promising. We have been invited to join an elite group of specialist schools – the High Performing Specialist Schools – and take on a second subject specialism. We have applied for Science (with Mathematics). Although the outcome has yet to be confirmed, we are hoping that we will be successful. Not only would a new specialism bring much-needed funding into the School, it would give us an opportunity to showcase our excellence in the fields of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

As you may know, I am very excited about the prospect of Reading School playing a leading role in our community in helping to raise standards in Science generally. I believe we are also very well situated to create opportunities for students here and elsewhere in Reading to experience teaching and learning in engineering, computer technology and even medicine and find out what it takes to pursue careers in these areas. The specialism would enable us full use of an ever wider range of partners in our customary pioneering and creative ways.

I am also pleased to announce that we have appointed a Development Administrator who is to assist the School in establishing a Development Office. Marilyn Bentley will be joining us in November and will be delighted to hear from any ORs who want to find out about our plans for the future. In particular, she will be helping the School widen its network of contacts with all former pupils so that we can keep in touch and, with luck, organise more opportunities to visit the School and share in our successes.

As do the Old Redingensians Association I have long thought that the best way for Reading School to secure its future is to re-connect with its past. Examples are the OR Remembrance Service (this year held on Sunday 9 November) and the separate School Act of Remembrance now held annually in the Quad (this year on Tuesday, 11 November led by the Venerable Peter Coombs OR), to which ORs are also welcome.

Floreat Redingensis!  
John Weeds  
Principal

## Some facts and figures

### Year 9 SATs:

Science: Level 7	93%
Maths: Level 8	98%
English: Level 6/7	100%

### GCSE:

%age grades awarded at A*-A	76%
%age grades awarded at A*-C	99.3%
%age candidates achieving 5 x A*-A	91.9%
%age candidates achieving 5 x A*-C	100%

Adam Wright and Daniel Rowlands were both placed in the top ten students in the country in Mathematics. This was from a total of 285,777 entries. Adam Wright was also placed in the top students in the country in German. This was from a total of 19,484 entries.

### AS-level:

%age grades awarded at A-B	80.6%
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### A2-level:

%age grades awarded at A-B	90.9%
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James Kennedy and Michael Carson were both placed in the top ten in the country in French. This was from a total of 7,567 entries. Yoshi Iizuka was placed in the top ten in the country in Japanese. This was from a total of 261 entries.

Teachers and students should be congratulated on achieving the best A2-level results ever in breaking through the 90% A/B grade barrier.

### Oxbridge results:

31/32 offers successfully taken up – again the best results the school has achieved in living memory.

# School News

West House, captained by Neeraj Mawkin, won the Cock House Cup for 2007/08, their first win for 10 years. Cups and trophies were awarded at a prize giving ceremony held in the Quad on 18 July.



*Left:  
The Trophy Table*



*Right:  
West House ribbons on  
the Cock House Cup*

Officer holders for the 2008-09 School year are:

Captain of School:	Joel Richardson (S) ( <i>near right</i> )
Vice Captain of School	Aaron D'Sousza (W) ( <i>far right</i> )
Captain of School House	Jieyun Lee
Captain of County House	Matthew Beddow
Captain of East House	Douglas Cave
Captain of West House	Jamie Scuffell



From the April 1921 School magazine;

"For the first time on record, we suppose, the numbers in the School exceed 500. It is truly a marvel how we all manage to pack ourselves in." There are currently 880 boys at School!

The 'A' Level results this year brought the School's highest percentage of A and B grades. Recent assessments of performance make much of 'value added' - a calculation of the progress made between GCSE and 'A' Level, therefore, arguably, of how much real difference a School is making. Reading School has achieved the highest rank in the Country over the last three years.

In the last issue we reported the 32 place offers at Oxford and Cambridge; a record figure of 31 places has been confirmed. Praise for equal achievements elsewhere must also be given, including 7 awards of places at medical schools and one at the Royal Veterinary College.

The School maintained its usual exceptional standards in both A Level and GCSE Grades. Ben Morris achieved 11 A\* grades plus 1 A grade in the latter.

Sports Achievements in the last School Year included an unbeaten Season for the Year 8 (Colts) Rugby XV, the Berkshire Badminton Championship at U14, U16 and U19 levels and the Berkshire (Walsh) Cup and U19 League Championship for the Football 1st XI. The Football 2nd XI also won their U19 Berkshire League and were undefeated, conceding only one goal. The U13 XI were the Reading and District Cup winners. In Basketball both the U19 and U16 sides reached Berkshire semi finals for their age groups.

Individual sporting recognition came to the following:

<b>Football:</b>	County U19 selections:	Alex Walton	(East)
		Lloyd Dyson	(East)
		David Bellis	(East)
<b>Hockey:</b>	England U16:	Shiv Kapoor	(School)
<b>Athletics:</b>	N. Ireland Decathlon:	Thomas Fright	(East)
	Berkshire Team: (English Schools	Sam Dyson	(School)
	Cross Country Championship)	Henry Hoskins	(County)
<b>Rowing:</b>	GB Rowing: (World Class	Lloyd Dyson	(East)
	Start Programme)	Richard Applewhite	(West)
<b>Archery:</b>	Great Britain:	Chris Wells	(East)



Mr Ben Coggan, who has taken over the Housemastership of East Wing, ran the London Marathon this year in support of the charity *AbleChildAfrica*.

A year 12 (Sixth Form) team, under the guidance of Mr Dawes, won the top prize in the *Shares4Schools* National Business Competition. Starting with £1,500 they achieved 24% profit on their investments over a period of 9 months.

The class of 2008 Leavers Year Book properly reflected the achievements of an exceptional generation who worked hard and played hard and earned the affection and admiration of the Staff common room.

20 boys in Years 8 and 9 took part in the Berkshire Magistrates Mock Trial competition last March at the County Court in Reading, but they did not go through to the next round.

Sums were raised for Sports Relief (£1,400) from the 'one mile' run around the perimeter of the School, and for the Air Ambulance (£1,466) and (£1,470), the first from the proceeds of County House's Charity Week and the second being the proceeds from Sports Relief Day. Reading School B overcame, by one point, Reading School A in the semi-finals of the Youth Bridge Challenge 2008, contested by 28 teams, but were narrowly beaten in the final by Nottingham. The 3 Reading School teams finished second, third and fifth overall.

This year, Humanities Week activities were led by Mr Castles, and included trips to the exhibition of Tutankhamen and to the British Museum, and various themed days for Years 8 and 9. Year 10 took part in Industry Week with a brief to design and market a 'Green Machine' which was triumphantly launched. Year 12 took part in the '*Annual Challenge of Management*' and a number of career choice conferences.

Rowing is enjoying something of a revival at School and the OR Association recently made a grant of £3,000 to assist. Mr Philip Rothbart, although he no longer teaches, remains Master I/C Rowing. A fuller report of activities on the river will appear in our Spring 2008 issue.

## Staff Notices

### Mrs M A McDonald BA MA (1981 – 2007)



**Margaret McDonald came to Reading School to teach English in 1981-2. It seems absurd to refer to Margaret as part-time, but in fact that was the basis of her initial employment by John Bristow. Over the course of the next twenty-five years she went on to make a contribution to the life of the School which is second to none.**

It was clear from the start that the School had acquired a first-rate teacher of English, and Margaret went on to become a full-time member of the Department and eventually its Head. She brought to this role an unusual blend of idealism, vision and pragmatism. New initiatives and teaching methods were explored and the Department, the courses it offered, and its number of students, all expanded. Yet for her pupils Margaret's trade-mark remained the down-to-earth guidance they received in delivering what was required for examination success and in the advice she gave. She was a teacher they trusted to help them achieve their potential.

Before she became Head of English, Margaret had already had a massive impact beyond her teaching. ORs of a certain generation, remembering their own experiences with affection, ask about the dramatic life of the School perhaps more than any other aspect. By the mid-eighties, there had not been a School play of any significance for some time. Margaret revived this, and then went far beyond it, developing Drama as a subject in the curriculum, eventually as far as A level. By the time she moved on to other responsibilities the study of Drama had been established as a strength of both GCSE and the Sixth Form, and it remains so today.

The last years of Margaret's career saw her as one of the crucial influences on the direction of the School. There is not room here to explain fully the significance of the School's Humanities College status (it does not mean that those subjects are advanced above others), but it was Margaret who drove through the application and oversaw the implementation of the new specialism in practice. The OFSTED Inspectors of 2007 described its operation as outstanding and expressed astonishment at the impact it had had within its first year. This was a fitting conclusion to one of the great Reading School careers.

Ned Holt

Mr D W Castles BA PGCE Head of Geography has left to become Assistant Headteacher at Aylesbury Grammar School.

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Mr A N Jones BSC PGCE has become Head of Science at Cleeve School, Gloucestershire.

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Mrs Helen Bradley has retired from the Modern Foreign Languages Department.

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Mrs Teresa Lewis leaves the Estates Department after 4 years.

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Mr C J Evans is the latest in a long line of ORs to join the staff which currently also numbers Mr E S Holt and Mr I Judd in its ranks. Chris Evans (1990-97) is the new School Chaplain.

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## Cricket and Basketball Tour to Grenada 2008



A party of 23 boys and 3 staff based themselves at the Gem Beach Hotel for 14 days of cricket and basketball and experience of Caribbean life. Of the 7 full cricket matches played (a further one was rain abandoned) 4 were won and 3 lost. The Captain of Cricket, Michael Carson, was named *player of the tour* (and scored the only 50), Adam Carson was *batsman of the tour* and Martin Fisher *bowler of the tour*. Every boy played at the National Stadium – pictured above – (against some very good players from St George's Academy), and so have had the great privilege of playing in one of the Caribbean's best test match venues, which was reported as being 'breathtaking' with a perfect outfield and enormous stands.

There were also 7 basketball games of which 5 were lost (one loss was to the Grenada Under 18 Schools Champions, St Marks, another to Moonshadow Eagles Under 23s) and 2 were won. All were competitive and Reading School was often pitched against older opposition. Michael Kehinde gained the appellation as *most influential player* of the tour, Dan Conroy as *most attacking player* and James Ching as *most defensive player*.

The social side of the tour was memorable and varied from crab racing to limbo dancing.

The heat and conditions had been challenging but the overall experience an exhilarating one which will not be forgotten by the tourists – or the Masters, Messrs Walder, Roca and Pedlow.



## Results

### Cricket:

Reading School 155-7  
St Andrews School 103  
St Davids School 104  
Combined School XI 204-6  
St Georges Academy 208-6  
West Indies Junior XI 175-8  
Reading School 181-8  
Grenada Boys School 174-7 (rain stopped play)

McDonald College 157-8  
Reading School 104-4  
Reading School 105-5  
Reading School 208-6  
Reading School 159  
Reading School 157  
Westerhall School 132

### Basketball:

Won 3 Lost 5 (full details not available)

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## Preview of Rugby Season 2008

### Tom Francis, Captain of Rugby writes:

"This season we are trying to build on a difficult year which saw us end up with only one win of all our games. We hope to achieve this target early on and so far the signs are looking promising, narrowly losing to John Hampden with the last play of the game and containing a very powerful Pangbourne side.

Despite these two losses team morale is high as the performances have been to a good standard and fully committed. Our strength this season is our defence, even though we aren't the biggest side and our weakness a lack of attacking flair. With the high quality of coaching and the commitment to training shown by all the players, I'm sure we can build on last season and help set higher standards for a very promising under 16's squad to carry on."

*(The team welcomes support from ORs on match days. A Rugby tour to New Zealand will take place next year – Ed.)*

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School News in our last 2 issues had as a tailpiece a representation of the School that once appeared in *The Illustrated London News*. For the next issue or so, Mr Graham Ireland, formerly Director of Music at the School (1980-2001) has kindly agreed that we may use an image of a watercolour of the School by Peter Toseland ARCA, which Graham especially commissioned. Artistic licence was exercised to emphasise the Chapel – much loved by Graham (and so many others!).

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With thanks to those members of staff who supplied information to enable this section to be compiled. Contributions, for the Spring 2009 issue should be sent to School Liaison correspondent Mr J M Evans, 1 Skerritt Way, Purley-on-Thames, Reading, RG8 8DD. Telephone: 0118 942 4578.



# 'Look Wide – Look Forward – Look Deep'

## Scouting at Reading School Part 3

In the last issue we printed reminiscences from the 1940s and early 1950s and D C (Derek) Patience (1954-61) now gives his memories of the 1950s and early 1960s as follows:

"Having been a member of a cub pack prior to starting at Reading School, it did not take me long to get involved with the Scouts at School, when I became a member of the Curlew patrol in the Junior Troop, meeting weekly at the old hut on Morgan Road sports ground. In my time with the Scouts, I don't think I ever missed a Scout camp, whether at Easter, summer or the various half-term camps. I can recall being the subject of a traditional leg-pull when, as a greenhorn on my first camp at Piltdown in Sussex, I was sent on a wild-goose chase by Kim Bull to search for a "sky-hook". It was there, too, that I learnt to cook such culinary delights as 'dampers', made from



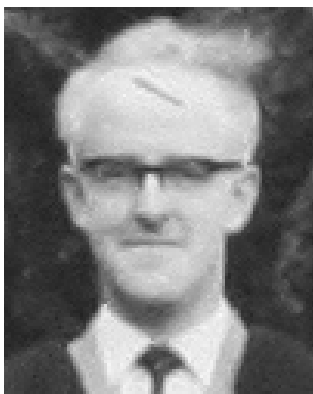
just flour and water with just a little salt.... and proudly cooking some for my parents on my return!

The camps were always the highlights, and for those days, they were varied and far flung - from the



Stuckeys' farm at Firlands in Burghfield Common during half-terms, Easter camps at Padworth Common (with a first-ever pint at the Royal Oak!), a week sailing on the Norfolk Broads, a trek along the Ridgeway, a couple of camps at Windermere in the Lake District (where it rained incessantly!), and several visits to Snowdonia, including one during the Christmas holiday period when we ascended Snowdon by way of the railway track to see the new year in from the top. The highlight, however, was most definitely the trek along the Dordogne valley with the Senior Troop in 1959, when we visited the Lascaux cave (and others) with their prehistoric paintings, as well as the other famous sights along the valley. culminating in a couple of days at the wonderful site of Rocamadour. One of the leading lights on that trip was our current president, Cedric Scroggs, and I can well remember being impressed (as were the locals) with his command of the French language.

There were many characters in the Troop, outstanding amongst whom were Mike Brown, who was SM throughout my time in the Juniors; Kim Bull, who always had a cheery smile in spite of his disability; Mike ('Prog') Prout, ASM in the Seniors; and of course Geoff ('The Dome') Moore, who took us on that trip to France.



Geoff Moore

Kim Bull was an accomplished accordionist, and led us on many a sing-song around the camp-fire, and I remember taking part as a member of his country-dance band (as a banjo player) in various 'gigs' around Reading."

**Our chronology reached 1960 last time and the era of Michael Holmes and Steve Wright as Scout Masters. The Senior Troop had ventured abroad for the first time in 1959 (to France in the area south of the Massif Central as Derek Patience records above). Kim Bull had also ceased his eleven years activities with the 55th that year.**

In 1962 a new Scout Hut at Morgan Road, dreamt of for years, was finally erected. The product of much hard work and fundraising, not least through the efforts of Mrs M H Lowe who coordinated, as Secretary of the Group Committee, much of

the effort. Mr Wright departed at the end of that year, for Eton College, and his place as SM (S) was taken by Mr Graham Merlane.

The new Hut had its official opening on 7 June 1963 by the County Commissioner for Berkshire Col C E M Grenville-Grey, CBE. That year the Senior Scouts went camping in Andorra and the Scouts Summer Camp was also overseas – in Guernsey. Mr I C Warburton took out a warrant with the Troop.



*The Opening of the new Scout Hut in 1963*

In 1964 RA Ballard and J E S Stares represented Berkshire in the Annual Queen's Scout Parade and Service at St George's Chapel, Windsor. Summer Camp was an ambitious trip to the Black Forest and as a result of their hike report, Ballard and Howes gained the Senior Scouts first Explorer Belts. They were presented the following February by the County Commissioner on the occasion of a Scout Concert in Big School.

In 1965 Michael Holmes left for a Deputy Headship to be "*remembered as a highly successful Scout Master....*" with the "*...Scout Hut at Morgan Road....a permanent monument to his enthusiasm and capacity in inspiring others*".

Later that year he and Mrs Holmes returned as guests (with the Headmaster and Mrs Kemp) to the Annual Camp Dinner for parents of Scouts and he showed a film (a copy is now in the Archive) of the Troops activities over his years with the 55th.



*Michael Holmes*

Mr Warburton took over as Scout Master. Brian Hawkins, a Scout, Senior Scout and Scouter with the Troop for 14 years left for Southampton in 1967.

In 1969 Mr Warburton himself left after leading the Scout Troop for four years and Mr Merlane left in 1970 for a Deputy Headship at Wallasey Grammar School. Mr M D Baldwin also left in 1970 and Mr M J Bush took over as leader with Michael Prout and Philip Ackroyd continuing their involvement. Times they were a changing, as we shall see in the next issue, when the final part of '*Look Wide, Look Forward, Look Deep*' will appear.

KCB

# Where are they now?



By Ken Brown

After an idea by Tony Waring OR PP

So we can inform contemporaries we ask members to send news of themselves to K C Brown, 11 Easington Drive, Lower Earley, Reading, RG6 3XN, Tel: 0118 966 7013 or email: KCBrown11@aol.com.

## M O BROOKS (WEST HOUSE 1990-97)

Since leaving School and graduating from Nottingham University in Computer Science, Marek has started an English Teaching Agency, married Rin (a Thai), bought a house in Bangkok and joined numerous Bangkok football teams. Somewhat disillusioned with working in computers, he had decided to travel the world, and so he did. Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, USA and Poland were all favoured with his visits but it was to Thailand that he decided to return and teach. After six months a Thai friend asked him to help start an English teaching school and *SpeakEZ* came into being. Children from the ages of 3 to 15 are taught English, partly through songs and games. There is a website ([www.speakeazy.in.th](http://www.speakeazy.in.th)). Marek plays in a number of football teams including the multinational *Bulls Head Brazilians*. He is very enthusiastic about Thailand and feels he is settled there.

## G R X HICKSON (COUNTY HOUSE 1988-93)

Gilles graduated from the University of Manchester, and went to the University of Glasgow as a PhD student, gaining his doctorate in biochemistry in 2002. He then took a Post Doc position at the University of California, San Francisco. Since he published his first paper whilst on a year's break from University of Manchester, in Toulouse, Gilles has begun to make his name in his field and this year has accepted a post at the French speaking University of Montréal, to which he goes with a substantial fellowship. In 2006 he married Catherine Shepherd in France and their son, Oliver, was born in September 2007. Leisure activities include membership of the British Hotchkiss Society (of which his Father is President). Hotchkiss was one of the five 'Grandes Marques' of French automobile. He is also a keen long distance runner in support of the *Children With Cancer Fund*. Gilles may be contacted at [gilleshickson@gmail.com](mailto:gilleshickson@gmail.com)

## K S MILLS (WEST HOUSE 1942 – 47)

Ken was 15½ when he left School from Modern VIB. He had arrived on a scholarship and he was one of the youngest in class. He joined Barclays Bank in August

1947 at £110 per year and 41½ years later retired as manager of a London office of Barclaytrust. He has been married to Rosemary for 55 years and has two children and two granddaughters. Since 1952 he has been a Methodist Local Preacher; he has enjoyed sport all his life – cricket until aged 60, football refereeing until 70, and he is still playing tennis. On retirement he became Hon Treasurer of the national charity, *Biblelands*, until 2006, and he is now chairman of a local charity, *Care for Guildford*. The Operatic Society gave him a love for Gilbert and Sullivan which has resulted in singing in all their operas except *Cox and Box*. Ken wonders if the Prefects detention given on his last day at School is still owed – over to you, Peter Coombs, School Captain in 1947...

## D C PATIENCE (COUNTY HOUSE 1954-1961)

After leaving School Derek joined the Midland Bank in Broad Street, Reading and was with them for 18 years, at various branches, becoming a Branch Manager in the Slough area. Disillusion set in and with it a complete change of direction. Cricket, fostered by John Haines ('Beefy' to some, Derek amongst them, 'Hank' to others) is a lifelong passion – Derek has been a qualified umpire for 30 years and currently officiates in the Lincs Premier League. He became groundsman at Reading Cricket & Hockey Club and his 13 years there included the relocation from Church Road to Sonning Lane. For a while he looked after the Redingensian's cricket square. He then became, successively, head groundsman at Stafford School, Lincs., assistant bursar and finally bursar there (from 2003 until Derek's retirement last year). Roman archaeology and family history are long time interests. Derek married Gloria in 1998 and has a son, Stephen, from his previous marriage.

## M T D FEAR (WEST HOUSE 1986-93)

Armed with an Economics degree from Luton University, Mark found his way into the financial world and is now an AVP for the Hedge Fund Company FRM.

He lives in London with his South African fiancée (no children, yet, he says). He remains an avid rugby player and is a keen traveller. Prospects for early retirement may have taken a knock or two with recent developments in the City but he is working at it, whilst attending to his fledgling property empire in London, Edinburgh, and Durban. Mark can be contacted on [markfear@yahoo.com](mailto:markfear@yahoo.com).

**M C Hickson (East House 1942-49)** Gilles Hickson's (see above) Uncle, Michael Charles Hickson, died at the early age of 60, on 1st October 1992, after 25 years in Australia. Michael was a corporal in the CCF, keen on rugby and in the chorus of both 'The Yeoman of the Guard' and 'The Gondoliers' in the School's celebrated Gilbert & Sullivan productions. Michael had been one of the first 100 students at Hurley Agricultural College, but left farming for pharmaceuticals and emigrated to Albany, West Australia in 1968. He married and had four children. We thank his brother, Paul Hickson, for the image of Michael opposite, which was taken circa 1946.



**The Evening Post** in their regular feature *Pick of the Past* featured, in September, four boys from Reading School who, in 1990, made a short film about the controversial development of Bugs Bottom – known to many readers. They were all 15 years old at the time. Now Stephen Duce is sadly no longer with us; none of the other three, Matthew Coleman, Graham Avery and Nicholas Gliddon are members of the Association. Does any contemporary reading this paragraph know anything of their subsequent careers?

## The Second Time Around



**Standing:** J L (Julian) Pollock (1958-65), G V (Geoff) Bevitt (1957-64), D J (David) Steer (1955-63), R H (Robert) Carr (1957-63), A J (Adrian) Cottrill (1955-62), C J (Chris) Widdows (1955-62), R L (Bob) Towner (1954-61), I R (Ian) Brown (1958-65), R A (Bob) Ballard (1958-65)

**Seated:** A R (Tony) Waring (1940-46), K C (Ken) Brown (1955-63), Trish Brown, G W O (Buffy) Price (1948-56), A J S (Tony) Brown (1952-60)

There was a strong OR element at the marriage on 25 July, at St Mary's Sulhamstead Abbots, of the Hon Archivist and co editor of this journal Ken Brown and Patricia Burdekin, née Parker, once of St Joseph's Convent School. There were, as shown in the picture above, thirteen ORs amongst the guests at the wedding breakfast at the Royal Oak, Yattendon, and the wives, daughters, and mothers of many others: (in Yattendon Churchyard nearby, Alfred Waterhouse, architect of the School buildings and once Lord of the Manor of Yattendon, is buried).

The bride was given away by her cousin, Tony Waring (Past President ORA), and the best man was Ken's co-editor, Membership Secretary, Chris Widdows. Chris photographed the occasion and was joined in doing so, at the church, by D B (David) Cox (1951-57) Acting Hon Sec.

The organist was Graham Ireland, former Director of Music at School, and the wedding car, a 1928 Hotchkiss (called *Anastasia* as she carried Ingrid Bergman in the film of that name) was driven by the owner, Paul Hickson, the father and brother of ORs.



# An Expedition to Finnish Lapland in 1957

By Will Lunn

Lapland has a unique and picturesque landscape of its own, brought about by the retreating glaciers of the ice age. These glaciers have left an incredible array of ribbon lakes, low sandy ridges, rocky outcrops and rushing rivers behind them, much of which is now covered with pine forests and birch trees. This wilderness is generally termed 'Taiga'.

It was into this wild land that the British Schools Exploring Society would go in the summer of 1957. Out of 500 applications from member schools, universities, youth organisations and army cadets, they would take 63 people with 11 army officers and scientists who would direct operations and warn of potential hazards!

With 2 others from Reading School, I found myself in London for a rigorous interview. I was ushered into a large room with a number of distinguished looking gentlemen facing me behind a long table. Once I sat down they began firing questions at me; How much did I know about the Society and in particular the aspirations of the Society's founder Surgeon Commander Murray Levick RN? I was ready for this, having studied the report from the previous year's expedition. The Surgeon Commander had been a member of Scott's last expedition to the Antarctic in 1911-12 and had founded the society to form a coterie of pioneers for the Empire! Having made it clear that I knew what the Society's aims were I endeavoured to convince them that I knew enough about map work and field craft from the CCF and camping and could stand-up to the rigours of the expedition. I was also studying for A level Geography and had read some books on Lapland.

I was the lucky one of the 3 of us when the results of the interviews were announced; I was appointed to the survey team and the expedition would leave from London for Finnish Lapland in July not returning till mid September.

Now followed the tricky part of the operation – the total cost of the expedition for 3 months including



*Will kitted out*

train, coach and boat fares was estimated at £185 – quite a considerable sum in those days. I had to raise as much as I could and my father would pay the remainder. I went to see Mr Milward – shoe magnate and generous benefactor to the school and he promised about £75, but in return he would like me to join in some of his 'religious' meetings at the YMCA. This was no problem as I found them most interesting and made some more friends – Chris Smallbone OR amongst them! The rest of the funds came from ICI, a grant from the BSES themselves and of course my father!

My equipment arrived at our house in Earley a few weeks prior to the start of the expedition. This comprised a large army pack on a steel frame known as an 'Everest

Carrier' (they were similar to those used on the Everest Expedition of 1953), a rather thin cotton anorak with deep pockets, cotton trousers, an army peaked woollen cap, a gas cape and a mosquito net (to be worn over the head)! We purchased the remainder of the kit ourselves including a string vest, thick jersey and boucheron boots which would be issued on the



*Essentials*

boat. We were advised to practise carrying loads in our pack – so many evenings were spent carrying a number of bricks round the local roads and fields! My father gave me his leather Home Guard belt and I went out and bought a large horn handled sheath knife which I sharpened on a grindstone. I also had a



## An Expedition to Finnish Lapland - Continued

prismatic compass for steering across the countryside when on the march. Several thick pairs of socks were required as I knew we were going to have to contend with some serious rivers, lakes and swamps as we progressed. Finally my mother lent me her small folding camera and I made sure I had a good supply of black and white films. (Not much colour was used in those days).

A few days prior to leaving I packed all my equipment and expedition clothes in my rucksack and a suitcase (which would be left at Tromso) – at last I was ready!

On the day of departure my parents took me up to Kings Cross Station and the whole expedition assembled on the platform dressed in sports jackets and ties. (The good old days!)

We talked to one or two of the leaders and eventually said our goodbyes and boarded the train for Newcastle which was headed by a large apple green LNER steam loco. Within a short time we were waving from the windows as the train pulled out of the station – we were finally on our way.

We had lunch on the train and arrived in Newcastle later that afternoon, where some more members of the expedition joined us from various parts of the north of England.

We embarked on the SS Leda to cross the North Sea to Norway arriving in Bergen the next day. All our equipment and personal effects were then transferred to a coasting vessel, the SS Nordstjernen; it was smaller than the SS Leda and, except for some locals, we took up most of the boat – there were not enough cabins to go round, so some people had to sleep on deck. We then began a week long trip up the coast of Norway past incredible fjords and Norwegian scenery.

However, this trip was not all about relaxation and watching the scenery – a meeting of the survey team was called by our leader Capt Seaton who outlined the plan of campaign once we arrived in Finnish Lapland.

He explained that we were going to the wild Taiga area of Finland – up to 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle - made up of mixed coniferous and birch forest with elongated lakes and high rocky hills stretching into the distance; only the Lapps could live there permanently – the land of the midnight sun!

Lapland is unique in that it covers the northern and arctic part of four countries Norway, Sweden, Finland and part of north west Russia. The indigenous people who live there – the Lapps - are nomadic and take little notice of political boundaries; they pursue their own way of life as they have done for centuries relying largely on their reindeer for transport and food and the skins for clothing and shelter.



Although this huge area was largely unmapped by the Finnish Survey there were travellers' maps marked with a few settlements, the main rivers, and the highest hills which certainly helped as we went about our survey work.

Our job was to set up a 'trig' survey of a particular area south of the border with Norway and by means of 'plane tabling' set spot heights, contour the area and check the exact location of the main lakes, river courses and natural vegetation. We had with us theodolites (for initial triangulation) and plane tables for the rest of the work; under Capt Seaton's direction we busily began practising with them on the aft deck.

We steamed past Narvik -location of the British Commando raid in World War II - and then to the Lofoten Islands with a most picturesque passage between the islands. At Bodo we had two military policemen shouting at us when we pointed our cameras at some jet planes stationed on the airfield. Finally we reached Tromso on the North Cape where we unloaded our gear onto the quayside. By now we were dressed for the expedition and our travelling clothes and anything else not required placed in our suitcases in storage.

We all trekked off to one of the local hotels for an

## An Expedition to Finnish Lapland - Continued



*Using the plane tables*

evening meal of ham, hard boiled eggs, mushy peas and bread. We were told to save some hard boiled eggs and bread for the journey along the Arctic Highway into Finland!

and hopefully the bridge would hold up whilst the coaches crossed. The bridges creaked and rattled a bit, but held, and we were once again on our way. The settlement we were heading for was known as



*The rickety bridges*



*Scots wha' hae!*

Soon after dawn we stowed our gear on the roofs of our two large motor coaches and then climbed on board. The journey through the snow capped mountains which surround Tromsø and onto the Arctic Highway passed uneventfully. We continued through pine forests and out into the Taiga countryside of pine, birch and scrub where we met very few vehicles. We went on until suddenly the other coach had a puncture and we drew into the side of the road for the drivers to change the wheel. Next minute one of the Scottish lads climbed on to the roof, retrieved his bagpipes and sat up there playing to keep everyone amused. I think the leaders had a quick toddy to keep them going! The puncture repaired, we went on till we came to two rickety looking bridges – the driver asked the expedition leader to disembark his troops

Enontekiö which had a permanent population of Finns and Lapps. There were hunters, fishermen and of course shopkeepers providing all the necessities for living in those parts.

We wandered around in small groups and bought some souvenirs and cards. Then on again through two other small settlements till we reached the end of the highway to find the expedition advance guard in a small camp surrounded by piles of wooden crates and a Land Rover. We were divided into groups or 'fires' as we became known, to set up some more tents, collect wood and get some camp fires going for supper and a brew up. It was soon dark and we sat round the camp fires chatting about ourselves and the days to come.

## An Expedition to Finnish Lapland - Continued



*In camp*

In the morning we crawled out of our sleeping bags, got the fire going and soon had some porridge cooking for breakfast.

was with the rest who would work on plane tables - we were kept busy ferrying supplies up from base camp. Capt Seaton and his assistant Lt Kamm supervised



The next two days were all about opening the wooden packing cases which had been brought up by truck, sorting the contents out into equipment we needed straight away and the rations into man/days. As soon as there was enough, we loaded our rucksacks (or frames) with 40/50 lbs and set off along the track towards advance base camp – about 12 miles towards our designated area. The two man trig teams and the meteorological teams set off to establish camps from which to work – they needed to camp on prominent hillsides to take weather readings and to be able to communicate via their shortwave wireless equipment.

Meanwhile the trig teams started to set up main trig stations with beacons on high points of ground from which to triangulate the area for the survey work. I

all this and let us know when we could start our part of the work.

The day arrived when we set up our plane tables on Tshuukisvaara and started taking first readings and practising fixing spot heights on our mapping paper. We were then able to draw in the contours, rivers etc followed by the vegetation and other items of interest such as Tuppas (travellers huts).

As soon as we could, our survey pairs moved forward to new positions contending with all the difficulties this type of terrain could offer. A way had to be found round every large lake so we were forever crossing water channels (see images above) and plodding through swamps which caused clouds of mosquitoes to rise and pester us – I wore a trilby covered with mosquito

## An Expedition to Finnish Lapland - Continued

netting and thin gloves to cover my hands and used lashings of Finn Oil to put off the 'mosi menace'! We would cut birch poles and probe ahead to make sure of our footing but sometimes we had to pull people out with a pole or rope. Lt Kamm had a habit of charging straight across country on a compass bearing and got badly stuck in a bog one day and had to be rescued.

However it was not all wet and we did travel through forested areas where we were encouraged by an expert from the British Museum – Mr Groves – to collect various forms of fungus (some as big as dinner plates and known as *Boletus Versipellis*) to supplement our diet of pemmican stew (hoosh) each night. Some of the fungus and toadstools were no doubt poisonous, but the ones we collected were delicious. Some chaps had thoughtfully brought fishing tackle and extending



*Lapp women about to make up a tepee*

rods and managed to catch fish in the evenings. The rest of the daily rations were porridge (breakfast) twelve hard ships biscuits (I still have some of these 50 years on), tins of margarine and cheese and bars of plain chocolate, and to keep us healthy we had vitamin C tablets. In practice I found that I did not eat all my biscuit rations so I was often swapping biscuits for bars of chocolate.

We soon found that Lapland could be extremely wet and many times we trekked through the rain with equipment and stores for 2 or 3 days – one became used to being wet but the important thing was to keep bedding dry in a sealed poly bag and also matches for fire lighting. I took to cutting long strips of birch bark off the trees, rolling this up and putting it in a bag with the matches so that there was always dry fire lighting equipment. In an emergency some boot oil (of which we had plenty) could be drizzled over the birch bark to get a fire going. Branches of juniper which grew everywhere were also good fuel and burnt with a most aromatic smell. We had instructions to be careful not to set light to the woods, but we made some pretty sizable camp fires and sang lustily round them with the sparks going up into the night sky!

One night, camping in the forested area, we were enjoying our cocoa by the camp fire; all was quiet, with just the occasional rustling of the trees and it was very dark except for the light of the camp fire - when out in the darkness there was the sound of a twig snapping – we had company! We turned round to see a file of soldiers armed with submachine guns step out from between the trees. At first sight we too appeared to be in matching grey fatigues and looked uncommonly like young troopers, so I picked up my pack and showed them the union jack on the top of it, at which they seemed to relax a bit, slinging their weapons back on their shoulders. I noticed the white reindeer flashes of Finnish frontier guards as they moved in closer. One of them stepped forward and in broken English asked who we were – and we replied, "British Schools Exploring Society." He said that they had been warned by their commander to look out for us!



I thought it would be a good idea to offer them some mugs of cocoa which they enjoyed. The soldier who spoke English said he had just finished a university course and was now doing his National Service. They had their quarters about two miles away in a permanent large bunk house with sauna, just by the river – we could visit them if we wanted to. The next evening three of us walked over to see them and they invited us to try the sauna! We were well and truly steamed up in the sauna and then rushed out and jumped into the arctic river which ran past outside – spluttering, we climbed up a rough ladder out of the river and dived back into the sauna house again to repeat the process. We really enjoyed feeling 'toned up' and understood why all the Finns must have a wood burning sauna! We got on very well with the guards and it was so lucky that they had an English speaker amongst them.



*Inside a tepee*

## An Expedition to Finnish Lapland - Continued

Crossing the larger rivers (or torrents) in the area was a somewhat hazardous procedure. We would cut heavy poles from a birch tree, then the first man to try the crossing place would attach himself to a long rope, and feel his way forward with his pole whilst trying to stay on his feet which were being battered by small boulders carried along the riverbed. If all went well he anchored the rope to a tree on the other side and the next man could then cross trying to keep his pack out of the water and clinging on to the rope.

In time we came to higher ground on the frontier and whilst this offered respite from the wet and mosquitoes, it was extremely hard work carrying our food and equipment up long hillsides to the summit. Here the trig team had set up beacons and we worked hard, while the weather was clear, to contour in that part of the map. The frontier guards had also met a trig group and warned them to replace rocks on boundary cairns if they moved any of them to set up a theodolite. One member of the trig team actually caused a small landslide when a cairn collapsed underneath him when he was standing on it and he slid down the hillside with the rocks. The cairn had to be rebuilt.



*A briefing in camp (Will standing 4th from right)*

When we moved down to the areas by the lakes again, we noticed some long poles had been lashed together to form the basis for a tepee and as it seemed a good campsite we set up our tent nearby. Later in the afternoon we heard the tinkling sound of a reindeer bell coming along the track by the lake; a Lapp family of four with three reindeer were making for their campsite on our side of the lake. We watched as they tied up the reindeer and got their loads off – next the whole family unrolled a large sheet of canvas and proceeded to make up their tepee with it. Birch tree branches were gathered, to make a good thick mattress to sit on, around stones forming the fireplace inside the tepee.

I went over to them holding two mugs and a tin of cocoa and pointed to our fire to invite them over later for a drink. First they had to do some fishing, so they pulled out an old boat which had been concealed under the bank and the two daughters loaded a net and some fishing line onto the boat and rowed their

father out onto the lake. It was evident that the ladies do most of the work out there. An hour or so later the boat returned with several large fish – one of which was given to us. The family then came over to have cups of cocoa which they really seemed to enjoy, and we took some photographs of them in their traditional blue serge jackets and embroidered caps - the girls were quite attractive!

The mother indicated we should come and visit them in their tepee, so later two of us went over and sat round their fire drinking herb tea and eating baked fish and homemade bread which was delicious. We communicated in sign language mostly although they did know some German as some Germans had been in that area during the war. The girls appeared rather shy and just helped their mother with any cooking etc. Then one of the dogs took a liking to my anorak as

he had obviously smelt biscuits in the pocket and grabbed my sleeve whereupon his master told him to lie down again. We spent two more evenings with them in their tepee and became quite good friends. Then they decided it was time to move on so they dismantled the tepee, packed everything onto their reindeer and headed south.

A few days later we came to a sizeable river and saw a very large herd of reindeer heading for it – the leading reindeer entered the water and the whole herd followed; the long line of animals swimming across the fast flowing current was an amazing sight!

One night we noticed some dark clouds forming on the horizon after we had pitched camp on a hillside. In the early hours of the morning the wind got up and soon the tent was straining at its guy ropes, so much so that we crawled out of our sleeping bags and each of us held onto a tent pole to save the tent from being flattened. We held on for some time and then realised a tear was developing in the middle of one of the tent sides. Luckily I had a strong needle and some carpet thread in my pack. While the others held the poles I managed to sew up the hole in the canvas as the wind screamed round the tent. We heard afterwards that another tent had been completely flattened. Another night, when there was little wind, we heard a pack

## An Expedition to Finnish Lapland - Continued

of wolverines howling in the hills and I kept my large knife handy – but what good it would have done I do not know!

We were progressing well with the map work, adding vegetation and tupas (huts), and making contact with the other groups, when we could, to coordinate the alignment of the different map areas. Sometimes we could gather bilberries off the bushes and by crushing these and adding sugar we could make a passable bilberry jam – some chaps even ground down the biscuits and made a sort of unleavened bread, but it never tasted very good.

On every BSES Expedition there is a 'long march' of about 220 miles and this year the objective was to be Lake Inari near the Russian frontier. We all wondered who would be chosen for the march and this was usually the fittest members of the Expedition – however the chief leader Capt Bomford passed over most of the survey team as we had so much work left to do. The marchers achieved their objective in reaching the mighty lake, which is the largest stretch of fresh water in the Arctic. There was some scientific work carried out en route and over at least ten days. The army officers who led the march were impressed by the fitness and resilience of the young men who took part – considering each was carrying a 50 lb pack.

As time progressed into the end of August/early September the nights became colder until I found that if my boucheron boots were at all wet they would freeze solid overnight in the tent. In the morning I would stand them near the fire whilst we had our porridge and tea till they were thawed out. The frosty evenings also meant we had some wonderfully clear nights so that there was a mass of stars to be seen – one night I could see wavy curtains of green, orange and white light starting to appear all over the sky – these lights were the famous 'aurora borealis' and we found ourselves sitting outside the tent, by our campfire, just watching this amazing sight.

Eventually we got the call on the radio to start finishing our survey work, tidy camp and then pack up and move back south to Base Camp. Once there we assisted in cleaning and packing up all the tents and equipment. When we got back to the Lapp Settlement we tried our hand at some bartering. I swapped my gas cape for

a cured reindeer skin which I rolled up and strapped onto my pack and is still in my loft today. Another chap got hold of a full set of reindeer antlers which he strapped to the top of his pack and eventually got them home. The embroidered panels with which the Lapp women adorn their bonnets were far too expensive for most of us to consider buying but there were other handmade souvenirs for sale. When the chief leader heard over the radio that the two motor coaches were well on the way along the Arctic Highway to pick us up we



SS Leda

formed up into an orderly column and, carrying as much equipment as we could, set off along the track to meet them. We marched for miles singing songs while it got dark. Finally, we arrived at our rendezvous and boarded the coaches for the long return trip to Tromsø.

Back on the coasting vessel Capt Seaton and two of us began coordinating and joining up all the sections of the map we had produced so there would be a finished product ready for printing when we returned to the UK.

Five days later we arrived back at Bergen and transferred to the SS Leda to cross the North Sea to Newcastle. However no sooner had we left Bergen a full scale gale was upon us with all the lower decks awash and the ship heaving in all directions – one had to hold onto something all the time in the gangways and few could face their meals. I retreated to the top deck and just tackled some biscuits and an occasional hot drink. Finally, to everyone's relief, after twenty four hours we arrived in Newcastle for the journey back to Kings Cross where my parents met us off the train and we returned to our new home at Peppard where the family had moved whilst I had been away in the wilds of Lapland.

A few weeks later I received a letter to inform me that the Council had elected me to full Membership of the BSES which meant I could attend reunions and wear the coveted BSES tie.

The following January brought a reunion at the Royal Geographical Society with a film of the Expedition and the Chief Leader's lecture which was attended by the members, families, patrons of the Society and a representative from the Finnish Embassy who was presented with 'our' map.

WEL

# Sport

## Annual OR Prizes at School Sports Day 7 May 2008



The Inter House athletic sports resulted in School House winning the Junior Competition and West House both the Colts and Senior Competitions. Overall the standings were:

1st West; 2nd County; 3rd East; 4th School

Competition records were broken in the **Colts** for 200m (Jamie Lacey Smith) and Shot Putt (Matt Smedley), and the **Juniors** for 70m Hurdles Year 7 (James Harden) and Year 8 (Simeon Tsang), Triple Jump Year 8 (Simeon Tsang) and High Jump Year 8 (Ian Rowe).

The Principal, Mr John Weeds, kindly made the presentation of the OR medals which were awarded as follows:

<b>The Farmery Medals:</b>	800m	Robert Dutfield	(West)	2.09.08
	1500m	Robert Archibald	(County)	5.01.46
<b>The Maule Medals:</b>	100m	Michael Nevill	(County)	11.05
	200m	Ben Morris	(School)	25.72
	400m	Daniel Conroy	(School)	53.82
<b>The Gardiner Medal:</b>	Shot Putt	Thomas Fright	(East)	12.47 m

D B (David) Cox (1951-57) photographed the occasion for this Journal.

KCB

## OR Cricket Week 21 – 25 July 2008

The OR cricket week was originally intended as a means for School players and recent ORs to integrate into adult cricket and play some competitive touring teams. Changing social trends (greater mobility, gap years, foreign travel and vacation working, for example) mean that it has been difficult to attract players, and this year proved to be one of the most problematic. An added difficulty is that we have incurred substantial additional expense through the need to pay for the ground preparation, as the School no longer employs a dedicated groundsman but use a contractor for the School cricket season.

A thorough review is being held over the winter, with a view to changing the format and timing of the week - possibly combining with the School's cricket week and playing prior to the end of the summer term. More details will be published in the next issue of the *Old Redingensian*.

On a more positive note, we were blessed with good weather this year and the cricket was generally of a good standard and was enjoyable for all concerned. There were some notable individual achievements in the four games played, with three resounding victories - and one heavy defeat. Unfortunately, we were unable to field the same players for the Thursday and Friday and, so, our traditional 2-day game against Bowdon from Cheshire had to become two 1-dayers - a shame, since it is rare for players at this level to have the opportunity to play 2-day cricket.





## RESULTS IN CRICKET WEEK

1 ORs beat The Drones by 120 runs  
ORs 252 all out - J.Pryce 111 n.o., R. Dewey 36, J. Grimsdale 30  
The Drones 132 all out - J. Kennealy 4 for 31, P. Sainsbury 3 for 56

2 ORs lost to Kensington by 7 wickets  
ORs 166 all out - J. Grimsdale 59, J. Camidge 44  
Kensington 169 for 3 - J. Keleher 98 n.o.

3 ORs beat Bowdon by 109 runs  
ORs 189 for 6 declared - R. Dewey 103 n.o., T. Walder 56  
Bowdon 180 all out - M. Gorman 6 for 41

4 O.R.s beat Bowdon by 9 wickets  
Bowdon 155 all out - A. Northway 4 for 26  
O.R.s 158 for 1 - C. Rooney 81 n.o., G. Hellyer 51 n.o.

### Footnote

Over the last few years, a number of players have 'disappeared' without paying their match fees and have not responded to subsequent requests for payment. Such items as meals, ground preparation, umpires and the provision of cricket balls all add up to a considerable sum. It seems extraordinary that some ORs should consider themselves exempt and rely on others to pay for their leisure activities. If they are reading this article and have pangs of guilt, then please assuage it by sending a cheque. You know who you are and how much you owe!

TLC

*The OR organisers of Cricket Week and their contact details are;  
Terry Cartwright: 01428 602992 [terryc@whiteoaks.co.uk](mailto:terryc@whiteoaks.co.uk) or  
Andy Northway: 0118 962 1541 [andy.northway@heritagebathrooms.com](mailto:andy.northway@heritagebathrooms.com)*

## 5th OR Festival of Rugby 6 September 2008

The School field was crowded and cars lined the drive and the terrace for this increasingly well supported event; this year, by general consent, the best yet. The Festival atmosphere was heightened by a number of antics not least Andy McKenzie playing rugby in a mighty fat suit – which did not stop him scoring a popular try!



Seven OR 7-A-Side-Teams (an 8th for Year Group 1993-2000 had to scratch) representing 1996-2003, 1997-2004, 1998-2005, 1999-2006, 2000-2007, 2001-2008 and the 'Veteran' invitation side *Kaysies Crusaders* were refereed either by R W (Bob) Lewis or A (Alex) Beckey (Master i/c Rugby) and played 9 hard fought games followed by a plate match and the final, which took place between the 1996 -2003 team and the 2000-2007 side.



The 1996-2003 team (who called themselves *The Morgan Road All Stars*) ran out the winners by 33 points to 12 and received the Goss Shield from OR President, Cedric Scroggs, who took the opportunity to thank Bob Lewis (South House Master and Director of Student Support (PE & Games)) for presenting and organising the tournament with OR co-ordinator Alistair Wren (1978-85), Mike King (1957-63) – unable to be present this year – for the continued sponsorship by Goss and Company provided via the Jelf Group umbrella, and the Principal, Mr John



Weeds, for his presence and support. He also thanked the Parents Association for their active involvement (which this year included dispensing food and drink from a stall on the terrace).



John Vaughan, Master at School (1970-2003) was present and awarded the Vaughan Tankard to Player of the Tournament Tom Rockhill (1995-2002) and Bob Lewis made the presentation of the Clacy Cup to the School Player of the 2007 Season, Tom Francis.



A barbecue followed in the South House garden and then your correspondent returned to write up his copy – saving himself from the further entertainments that no doubt followed and are better imagined than written about.

In the absence of Chris Widdows photography duties were shared between Council members David Cox and Will Lunn.

KCB

*Previous winners of the Tournament are:*

*2004 The Inaugurals; 2005 The Gun Show; 2006 Team X-Treme; 2007 Trophy Boys*

## **OR Golfing Society Autumn meeting 24 September 2008**



*L to R: R P Lunn, A G Steels, N A Hunt, A J Downes, D M Bruton, R P Huggins, W E Lunn with S J Johnston behind him, G W O Price, R A Bissolotti*

The Henley Golf Club has an undulating and demanding course on the edge of the Chilterns and our party was divided into three groups with Rodney Lunn and Dudley Bruton accompanying the groups on buggies as non players and dispensing advice!!

After some skilful and enjoyable golf the winner of the Bucknell Cup with 37 points was Gareth Price and Stephen Johnson a close second with 36 points. John Downes won the longest drive competition for the silver tankard; medals were given for first and second places.

An excellent dinner followed with Rodney Huggins presenting the trophies in the absence of our current President Cedric Scroggs who was unable to attend. We look forward to the next meeting of the society in the spring at another local course.

WEL

*Will Lunn Hon Sec can be contacted at [golf@oldredingensians.org.uk](mailto:golf@oldredingensians.org.uk). New members are always welcome. If you think you would like to play in the Spring 2009 meeting, subject to dates etc, do let Will know provisionally.*

## **Caversham & Redingensians Cricket Club**

The Cricketers, still fielding a number of ORs including 1st XI Captain Andy Northway (1977-82) had another season of struggle with the 1st XI finishing 8th in Division 4B of Marrant Thames Valley League and the 2nd XI emulating them in Division 6A.

Should cricket end at Old Bath Road, the Rugby Club would see this as an opportunity to maximise ground use to support their funding – an ever more vital need in the comparatively rarified heights in which Redingensians RFC currently operate.

Redingensians Sports Club (who are the tenants of the Old Redingensians Association, at the ground, and to whom both the Rugby and Cricket Clubs are affiliated) have currently agreed that cricket will continue at the ground for at least three seasons more; but the onus is clearly on the Cricketers to make good use of this time to organise their future.

KCB

## **Redingensians RFC Ltd**

After finishing 8th in the twelve club South West 1 Division last Season, the Club looks to consolidate and challenge for the top half this year, under new Captain, Gavin Marsh. The squad is now semi professional , programmes are sold and money collected at the gate. The website is [www.redingensians.info](http://www.redingensians.info).

The 2nd XV (The Tigers) have transferred to play in the Canterbury Shield this Season. That league is used by the likes of Rosslyn Park and Esher for their development teams, and it constitutes a considerable challenge.

The Chairman of the Rugby Club this Season is A T (Andy) Lynch OR (1971-78) former Captain of School Rugby and of the Redingensians 1st XV in three separate seasons. He is also their representative on the Redingensians Sports Club Committee.

A clean sweep by all five senior sides against Cleve in the opening fixtures of the season – with the 1st XV triumphing 42-15 – provided an exciting start and as we go to press, 6 matches into the campaign, the 1st XV are topping the table, and unbeaten.



KCB

# Commentary

## The Old Redingensian Spring 2008

*Willingly to School (Part 2)* gave as much delight as Part 1. Mike Oakley (1944-54) writes of Andrew Bohman 'he was a striking figure in several respects. I believe he once waltzed into class twenty minutes late and told his form master "I'm sorry, Sir. My electric razor broke down." This was at a time when there weren't twenty of them in the whole of Berkshire. It caused a great stir.' Mike also recalls that Ken Ballard, Andrew's friend, was a member of the Reading Cycle Racing Club.

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J W M (Mike) Smith (1937-47) PP was relieved that Andrew thought the prefects of his day "mature" and says that Andrew's extraordinarily talented musicianship has given him a lifetime's love of *Fur Elise* and many other classical pieces. D O (David) Forder (1936-46) also commented on Andrew's playing of *Fur Elise* with what seemed to him 'astonishing intensity'.

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In his article Andrew commented on the unerring sense of key that the writer of the School song, *Floreat Redingensis*, possessed. James Boorne (1892-98) – later Bromley-Boorne - wrote words and music whilst at School and dedicated it in 1898 to Doctor Eppstein, the Headmaster. He won the senior music prize, became a White Scholar and went up to St John's College, Oxford to read Greats. When he came down he took Holy Orders; his death was reported in the January 1959 issue of the School magazine.

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R E Atkins (1939-44) found "*As It Was – Reading School 1939-45*" very interesting, remembering the first visit to the air raid shelter and 'Sarge.' "dashing out onto the School field with his tripod and bren gun. I think we all gave him a cheer", picking potatoes at the University Farm, fire watching (Archie Meads, Master at School 1921- 60 was in charge) which entailed sleeping in places such as the Junior School, the Wells Library or the locker rooms, rushing home for breakfast and then back to School – all by bicycle of course. He also recalls that fire watching meant a welcome boost in pocket money.

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Ron Atkins also referred to Mike Salmon's obituary in the Autumn 2007 issue. Mike was a fellow Tilehurst resident for many years and he and Ron's marriages took place on the same day – 4 September 1954 . Ron's was at Christchurch and the minister was JG Fry, Master at School 1916-47 who had been ordained after his retirement.

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No replies yet to George Critchell's plea in *Where Are They Now?* But Mike Oakley (1944-54) responded to Tony Waring's request on the same page to advise that Peter Pond is a neighbour on Padworth Common and still runs, with his wife, a livery stable.

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Mike also referred, apropos "*As It Was – Reading School 1939-45*", Peter Coomb's address, to the air raid on 10.02.43. He was on top of a trolley bus outside McIlroys with his mother and sister when the bombs hit. They crunched through broken glass to the Food Office – whence they were bound – and then went off to see a film at the Central Cinema – *Bambi* he thinks. Ken Mills (see editorial) also recalls walking home that day on broken window glass.

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Ken Ballard (see above) introduced Mike Oakley to the music adviser, John Russell, that Andrew Bohman wrote about in *Willingly to School*. Mike used to visit his office in Friar Street on the way home from School to chat - and smoke - and treasures the memory of these sessions.

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M R (Michael) Naxton (1959-67) has kindly supplied the original auction catalogue for the sale of Dr Barnard's coins (ref. *Headmaster's 4 – F P Barnard*) so it seems that Mrs Barnard did choose to realise the money on at least part of the collection.

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Dr I P (Peter) Latto (1952-59) commenting on *The Memorial Service for Sir George Pinker* remembers Sir George as a strikingly young consultant when he, Peter, arrived at St Mary's, in 1959, well liked by both students and senior staff, a committed teacher and an astute politician.

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David Forder (see above) especially appreciated Andrew Bohman's memories of Birdie Nightingale to whom, he says, he owes his career. David taught for 5 years after leaving Reading University but won a scholarship to RADA and had 35 years in the theatre, particularly enjoying directing and helping plan and bring a new theatre into being in Colchester. He became its chief executive until retirement in 1990 and is now a lay reader in the Church of England.

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# The Archive

Mr G A Pfeiffer, Master at School (1969-05) piloted the making, in the Art Department, of 'John Minton – a Film Portrait' which was shown at School in July 1973. In 1974 the film accompanied an exhibition of Minton's work in the Reading Museum and Art Gallery and again at the Graves Art Gallery when the exhibition moved to Sheffield.

A copy of this film is urgently sought for the Archive. As John Minton is now being commemorated by a 'Tea Tray' in Big School, a new showing of the film would be apposite. Can anyone help in locating the film at School or does anyone have a copy or is there someone who can put us in touch with Mr Pfeiffer, please?

Copies of the following School Lists are needed to complete sets, and we hope members will be able to supply them either by way of gift or by asking us to scan and return:

All pre-1920 plus 1922: 1956: 1964: 1980-82: 1985-90: 1994-2003.



*"The school of schools...  
of which the town was justly proud,  
and for which it was justly famous...  
second to none in reputation."  
Mary Russell Mitford writing in Belford  
Regis (her name for Reading).*



Upper III B 1944

Top Row

Second Row

Third Row

In response to the photo in the Spring 2008 issue, now reproduced above, confirmation of our findings was made in a number of cases and additional identifications were made as follows:

**Top row first left:** G C Freer (thank you to Tony Wells's sister Jane for this and to Rosemary Wells for sending it in).

**Second row fourth left:** Peter Stafford and **Third row second left:** Johnny Smallbone (thanks to both Ray Fullbrook (1942-49), former Captain of School, and Ken Mills (1942-47) for these two).

This leaves only second row **third left and seventh left** and **third row second left and fourth left** outstanding from our listing last time, but John Sanders (1939-45) throws a spanner in the works, because he thinks it is he, not Jones, **first left third row**, Groombridge, not Stafford **second row fourth left**, Meyer, not Groombridge **second row sixth left** and Hawthorne, not Crowder **centre of top row!** John is perhaps outgunned by Ray Fullbrook and Ken Mills in the case of Stafford – but what about the others....? More information please, readers!

We are grateful to Professor Alan Johnson (1940-49) for sending on a different photograph of essentially the same group of boys given to him by Barry Hardcastle (1939-49) but unfortunately it does not seem to help us with the four missing names!

We thank D A (David) Youens (1944-52) for photographs of the prefects in 1951, the first fifteen in 1951 and the second fifteen in 1949.

We are grateful for all the above and hope it inspires others to make contact if they have material for the archive, either to gift or to have scanned and returned. **Items should be sent to K C Brown, Honorary Archivist, 11 Easington Drive, Lower Earley, Reading, RG6 3XN who may also be contacted by telephone on 0118 966 7013 or by email at KCBrown11@aol.com.**

## THE RICHARD VALPY PORTRAIT



Dr. Richard Valpy, Head Master 1781-1830

The well known portrait of Richard Valpy, Headmaster, 1781-1830, is currently hanging in the Madjeski Gallery of Reading Museum. It was presented to the town by Valpy's great grandson, Edward Valpy Esq, who, it was reported in 1921, said "Where, if not in the Valpy family, it is certainly right that it should find a permanent home".

Possibly the School itself would have been the more appropriate home and indeed, after hearing that the portrait was to be sold, the School had raised, in a few days, more than half the sum required to purchase it – but then Edward Valpy announced his decision to make the portrait a gift to the town itself.

It has been on loan to the School in the past and the good news is that the Curator of Art at Reading Museum, Mrs Elaine Blake, confirmed recently that the Museum would be prepared to loan the portrait again.

KCB

## Willingly to School (Part 3)

**Reading School from 1944 to 1951 by Andrew Bohman**  
**A pictorial compilation of some of the persons, places and objects not illustrated in the first two parts**

To portray all the place and persons, let alone objects that Andrew brought so vividly to life in the last two issues of this magazine would be a mighty task indeed – well over 100 boys were mentioned, School staff in their dozens and places and articles innumerable. These two additional pages of images are intended to leave a further lingering savour of his marvellous reminiscences – Ed



Oldland



Culham



Galloway



Burkham



Youens



Bissolotti



Wilkins



Salt



Cole



Mack



Broughton



Piper



Moore

*Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing,  
 Thanks for mercies past receive;  
 Pardon all, their faults confessing;  
 Time that's lost may all retrieve;  
 May thy children,  
 Ne'er again thy Spirit grieve.*

*Bless thou all our days of leisure;  
 Help us selfish lures to flee;  
 Sanctify our every pleasure;  
 Pure and blameless may it be;  
 May our gladness  
 Draw us evermore to thee.*

*By thy kindly influence cherish  
 All the good we have gained;  
 May all taint of evil perish  
 By thy mightier power restrained;  
 Seek we ever  
 Knowledge pure and love unfeigned.*

*Let thy father-hand be shielding  
 All who here shall meet no more;  
 May their seed-time past be yielding  
 Year by year a richer store;  
 Those returning,  
 Make more faithful than before.*

*H J Buckhall*





*Yeats*



*Steward*



*Sirett*



*Austin*



*Forder*



*Stenning*



*Thank you, Andrew*



*Mr Peach*



*Charlie Poole*



*Timmy*



*Jim Lethem*



*Ben Dowse*



# Overseas Branches

## USA

### US Organiser – Roy Seymour (1952-57)

R F Seymour (Hon Sec, US Branch)  
PO Box 382  
SOMERVILLE  
NJ 08876-0382  
USA

Email: yors862@cs.com



## France

### French Organiser – Graham Fenner (1963-70)

All ORs living in France or moving to France, are requested to kindly notify Graham:  
G F Fenner  
I.S.T Bretagne  
9 Rue Commandant Charcot  
56000 VANNES  
France

Tel: +33 (0)2 97 62 11 81

Email: graham.fenner@groupe-icam.fr



## Australia

### Australian Organiser – Mike Jones (1957-64)

M M Jones  
PO Box 607  
West Mead  
NSW 2145  
Australia

Tel: +61 (0)2 9687 8884

Mobile: +61 (0)428 440 029

Email: specialty@bigpond.com



The Branch welcomed a new Sydney based OR – Ian Selinger (1962-69) has moved with wife Michele from Milton Keynes.

Mike Jones currently holds details of 32 ORs living in Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines. He can be contacted as above and can supply details of OR contacts in 6 cities (State and Kiwi OR reunions are encouraged).



The annual re-union of Australasian ORs was held during mid-June at Noosa in Queensland and Ron Peddley's pick of restaurant gave a background of sunshine and river to the food, wine and convivial laughter of the Friday lunch. Ted Webber was awarded the Ted Robson pewter for the year, on the pretext that he had the furthest distance on the day to travel home. (The two previous pewter winners are Roy Russell (2007) and Eric Burrows (2006).)

At the recovery Saturday barbeque breakfast School anecdotes became more raucous. On the Sunday, Eric, a relative newcomer to the State, explored the Eumundi markets. He returned with a framed photograph of the Spitfire squadron which he had serviced after the War.

During the subsequent week, Ron and Wendy Peddley hosted a Ladies Lunch at their home. This initiative was started last year by Ted and Marguerite Webber. This year Marguerite expressed surprise that we had fired rifles while at School. Initially, she thought that we fired at one another as part of the Cock House competition! This led to conversation recalling the Corps, the armoury, Sarge and the rifle range. Only Ted had been good enough to shoot at Bisley.

The next Noosa gathering is scheduled to start on Friday, 19 June 2009.

Attending the Noosa lunch were Ted Webber (1942-49) & Marguerite; Eric Burrows (1942-47), Ron Peddley (1944-51) & Wendy; Roy Russell (1936-41); Mike Jones (1957-64) & Alison.

Of those, Ron Peddley, Mike Jones, and Alison Jones were present at the first Australian Dinner in 1990 (see the menu card partially reproduced below). Mike tells the story of a remarkable meeting that preceded the first dinner:



*In my early forties I used to fly from Sydney to Melbourne fairly frequently. One April I was skimming the columns of the daily newspaper held up by my adjacent passenger who eventually noticed my part-time attention on today's news and started a conversation.*

*He told me that he had recently sold his market research business to an American company. They had retained him with an open-ended consultancy while he reviewed his retirement options. He had taken a first trip home to the 'Old Country' and had been disappointed by the scruffiness of his home town. He still felt proud when he visited its school but the main street, Broad Street, was not the same.*

*The mention of a Broad Street caused me to risk a reply in song while flying thousands of miles away and at thirty thousand feet from the alma mater. "Eight hundred years and more have passed". He replied at once, and with feeling, "Since Reading School was founded". We finished the first verse more or less in unison with a subdued "Floreat Redingensis", in consideration of the other passengers.*

*Ted Robson smiled and introduced himself. He had joined the Merchant Navy and married in Melbourne, while I had married a fellow immigrant to Sydney. Ted informed me that he was interested in a reunion of former pupils living in Australia. We exchanged addresses and later added names to a list of prospective attendees which eventually came to surpass forty. Perhaps the School did want us on our way! The first reunion was held in Sydney at the Royal Automobile Club at Circular Quay. It was as if the dozen or so of us had all known each other all of our lives. OR ties were worn and the School Song was sung often and with gusto. Ted has gone on to organise half a dozen of these biennial reunions. I attend but let him lead in the Song.*



## **Menu**

GRACE

POTATO AND LEEK SOUP (SERVED CHILLED)

TOAST: THE QUEEN

BEEF WELLINGTON ACCOMPANIED BY SAUCE BERNAISE

SERVED WITH CABERNET SAUVIGNON OR SEMILLION CHARDONNAY

TOAST: THE SCHOOL

PAVLOVA

SERVED WITH LATE PICKED FRONTIGNAC

COFFEE & MINTS

TAWNY PORT DECANTER

## **Attendance**

E.A. (Bunny) Aust '22 - '30	Margaret
R.J. (Richard) Barlow '32 - '37	Diana
J.T. (John) Clift '42 - '48	Joan
J.L. (John) Cummings '52 - '57	Patricia
N.A. (Nicholas) Fried '66 - '74	Sue
R.G. (Ron) Johnson '43 - '50	Diane
M.M. (Mike) Jones '57 - '67	Alison
R.B. (Roger) Larkinson '42 - '48 -	
W.A. (Tony) Maskell '46 - '49	Mary
R. (Ron) Peddley '44 - '51 -	
E.A. (Ted) Robson '38 - '46	Alex
A.W. (Alan) Tice '32 - '36	Doris
C.R. (Charles) Tice '31 - '38	Zita
D.F. (Don) Tice '38 - '39	Anne

The School Song was also printed on the menu card. Nowadays, we are told, Australian ORs add a third verse (penned by Charles Tice) as follows:

As Australian ORs we unite  
 To tell our school day stories  
 Remembering that Blue and White  
 Inspired our early glories.  
 The verses of our old School song  
 Remain with us forever.  
 Let us now with our voices greet  
 The ties that time won't sever.  
 So let her song  
 Rise loud and strong  
 "Look to the light,  
 Strive for the right,  
 Floreat Redingensis!"

Whether J Bromley-Boorne would approve we shall never know!  
 - Ed

# Obituaries

## PROFESSOR JOHN LLOYD ACKRILL (1932-40)



John Ackrill became one of the leading figures of the 20th Century in the study of Ancient Greek philosophy. With a small group of others he was part of a sea change in the study of ancient philosophy involving the conviction that ancient texts need not only meticulous classical scholarship brought to bear upon them but also the utmost philosophical

rigour and acuity. He was Professor of the History of Philosophy from 1966-89 and a Fellow of Brasenose College from 1953-1989.

At School he was Captain of East House and Vice Captain of the School, Captain of Chess (School Initials for three years, House Initials for five), became the Senior Ordinary Member of the Debating Society (Character 1938, 39, 40), Hon Sec of the Library, a member of many Societies and a Lance Sergeant in the OTC. Academically outstanding, he won the Butler Essay Prize in 1939 and went up to St John's College, Oxford (as a Sir Thomas White Scholar) where he took a 1st in Classical Mods and then went off to War. On his return he took a 1st in Greats in 1948.

His first academic post was as Assistant Lecturer in Logic at the University of Glasgow and after a year he was appointed to a new University Lectureship in Ancient Philosophy at Oxford, which came with an initial study leave spent by him in Switzerland and at Princeton. In 1953 he was elected to a tutorial fellowship and then in 1966 became the first holder of Oxford's Professorship of the History of Philosophy.

Dr Harry Judge, at the Memorial Service held on 14 June 2008 stated that John Ackrill's life was distinguished by a remarkable institutional continuity – he was always glad to acknowledge his debt to Sir Thomas White, the benefactor of Reading School and the founder of St John's College. His undergraduate career at St John's had been brilliant though it had to straddle five years of distinguished war service with the Royal Berkshire Regiment and General Staff (he reached the rank of Captain). On his return to Oxford in 1953 he remained thereafter at Brasenose, resisting temptation to migrate elsewhere, even when elected to the chair of the History of Philosophy which, in the way of Oxford professorships, was associated with a particular college; in this case Keble. In quiet and reasoned argument John Ackrill won the day and remained where he was, to the benefit of Brasenose and the loss of Keble.

In that same year of 1953 he married Margaret Walker Kerr, a union that lasted until his death more than 50 years later.

*"His contribution to the governance and smooth running of the College", said Dr Judge, "were powerful, all the more so for being understated. He did not speak at length at Governing Body because he did not need to: a few plain words (or even a nod or expressive wince) were sufficient to move the argument one way or the other".*

Professor Ackrill's regular graduate classes were on Plato and Aristotle and his first book on Aristotle's *Categories* and *De Interpretatione* drew a review which captured Ackrill's particular style *"Mr Ackrill never raises his voice"*. He was deemed the ideal person to take over the *Clarendon Aristotle Series* when its founder, J L Austin, died in 1960. Ackrill was editor for more than 40 years. The aim of the series was to present accurate translations of Aristotelean texts and deliver philosophical commentaries upon them. Ackrill's own translations *"set a standard for faithfulness and elegance which few others have equalled"* (The Times). John Ackrill was also made a Fellow of the British Academy and an Honorary Fellow of St John's.

The Memorial Service in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, was taken by the Chaplain of Brasenose, and followed by a reception at Brasenose College. A reading from the Ross translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*, revised by Ackrill and J O Urmson, was given by Dr Lindsay Judson and further readings by Jill York (from Proverbs) and – outstandingly – by Professor Ackrill's young grandson, Freddie Hinds (*Adlestrop* by Edward Thomas). Tributes were given by Professor Terence Irwin, Nigel Hinds (son-in-law) and Dr Harry Judge. The music was played by Rod Varty and included *Chanson de Matin* (Elgar) in which he was joined by Marion Ackrill on flute.

John Ackrill displayed in his personal life the same qualities found in his academic work; modesty, courtesy, kindness and unfailing good humour. His presence was quiet but it commanded attention and respect and he brought a sense of purpose, clarity and precision to all that he did and said.

He is survived by his wife Margaret, his daughters Judith, Marion and Alice, by his son Rob and grandchildren Millie and Freddie.

John Ackrill died on 30 November 2007 aged 85.

KCB

## COLONEL WALLACE KEITH PRYKE MBE (GREEN HOWARDS) (1931-34)

In the Spring 2008 issue of this journal a page was devoted to the remarkable School career of Wally Pryke from his entry in January 1931 as a boy in East House to his departure in 1934 as a West Wing boarder and Captain of School, already holding a commission in His Majesty's Army in the Supplementary Reserve of Officers of the Essex Regiment. He retained his links with the School all the rest of his life.

In 1936 he passed in 3rd place in the exam of the Supplementary Reserve for commissions in the Regular Army. He had also been selected as a trainee for the Asiatic Petroleum Company but gained, that year, a Regular commission in his chosen Regiment, the Green Howards. Posted to India he took part in two campaigns in Waziristan on the North West Frontier against the Fakir of Ipi and took full advantage of the opportunities for pig sticking, polo and game shooting. He was also whipper-in for the Regimental pack.

At the start of WW2 he was a Company Commander in a new battalion of his Regiment and then was sent to join the King's African Rifles and saw action in Italian Somaliland, Eritrea and Ethiopia. In 1943 he was chosen for Staff College in Haifa, returned as a Brigade Major to East Africa, went to Italy on special operations and then to Burma, where his Brigade headed 11 EA Divisions advance down "Death Valley" against the Japanese.

After being given command of a Uganda KAR battalion he returned to the UK for three years as a Staff Officer in the War Office. Service in Germany and at BAOR HQ followed and then the Armed Forces College in the USA. Back in the UK he survived a serious mid-air collision on a training course near Salisbury and then saw further regimental duty in Austria.

Promoted to Lt Col he was a British delegate to a NATO nuclear weapons study group and the head of inter-arms training for Western Europe at Fontainebleau HQ.

He commanded his regiment in Hong Kong, then Germany, became Head of Operations in Northern Army Group, a Senior Liaison Officer in the USA (finding time to be elected Vice Commodore of an international Yacht Club in Virginia) and, finally, was posted to British Far East HQ in Singapore during the period of confrontation with Indonesians in Borneo.

At the age of 52, before retirement from the Army, he attended Harvard Business School with MOD sponsorship. He passed the Civil Service direct entry exam and went to the Board of Trade and then the Department of Industry before being promoted to Assistant Secretary at the Department of Energy to organise and run the National Energy Conservation campaign starting in the 1973/74 three day working week. With the support of Sir Bernard Ingham he then built up a strong organisation in Whitehall for energy

efficiency (the 'Save It' campaign etc) and on his second retirement he was asked by the World Bank to be an Energy Adviser in Washington which he did for two years, living in the Watergate.

On his return to England in 1982 he formed a successful international Energy Consulting Partnership and finally retired, for the third and last time, six years later.



In retirement Wally was a stalwart of The Royal Wimbledon Golf Club where he was always, to the staff, "The Colonel" and would find his beer drawn and waiting for him on the bar as he entered. On the course he was legendary for comfortably seeing off men half his age through his consistency and skill. Only in his 9th decade was he allowed free strokes, which he husbanded carefully to great effect. His other great pastime was Bridge, at the Hurlingham Club, in which he was both a perfect gentleman and a firm traditionalist, having no truck with modernisms. He also organised Art Appreciation Holidays; but, above all, he treasured his National Presidency of the Italy Star Association.

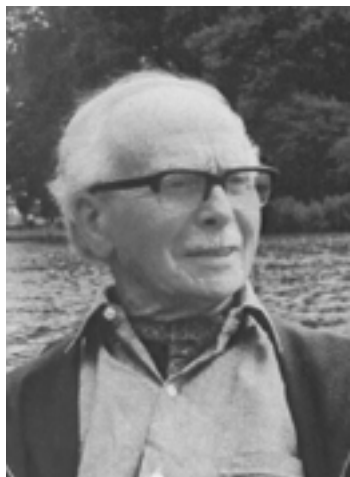
The Reverend Richard Sewell conducted his funeral service at St Mary's Church, Wimbledon. The piper's lament and the first and last posts were played. Tributes were given by Mrs Claire Woods, who organised the service, and by Field Marshal The Rt Hon Lord Inge KG GCB PC DL. A reading was given by Major J R Chapman of the Green Howards Association.

Wally Pryke was twice married and twice divorced and leaves a daughter Petra and two grandchildren Conrad and Freya in Australia. He leaves, also, a host of friends including Claire Woods, Jo Nonya and Andrew Craig, three constant companions of Wally. They were joined by the co-editors of this journal on 8th December 2007 in the beautiful churchyard of St Andrew's, Sonning on Thames, rainswept and romantic on that day, to inter his ashes. He now rests next to the grave of his mother and elder brother, Lt Col William Hanby Pryke, and a memorial stone has been raised to him.

Wallace Pryke was born on 3 October 1915 at Cairo, Egypt, the son of Hanby Pryke: he died peacefully at King Edward VII Hospital on 21 November 2007 aged 92.

KCB

## JOHN LEONARD CHILD (1918-25)



Len Child was one of a family of three brothers and one sister and entered School in 1918 (West House) the year of his elder brother's death on active service. He left from VMA and was in the OTC, a music lover – particularly piano – and enjoyed sport, keeping wicket at cricket and playing scrum half at rugby.

He joined the Westminster Bank with whom he stayed throughout his career, retiring as Manager of the Caversham Branch in 1968. In 1941 he married Peggy Berry who played tennis at Wimbledon. Len was a County standard tennis player himself.

Shortly after marriage he was commissioned into the RAF and served in India until the War ended, being a Flight Lieutenant at demobilisation.

Len's personal interests lay in photography, boating and camping and for many years he did considerable work for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

He is survived by Peggy, by his children Susan, Peter and Helen, six grandchildren and his brother Major R P M Child MC OR (1924-33) to whom we are most grateful for supplying material for this notice.

Len Child died on 22 June 2007 aged 99.

KCB

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## ARTHUR WILLIAM KNOTT (1945-46)

Like Graham Holley (see obituary notice in this issue) Arthur Knott was at School (in East House) for one year only in GVI under "Jock" Jessop. He went on to Culham College with Graham Holley and A J (Adrian) Parsons OR (1939-46). We thank Adrian for helping greatly with this notice. The two years at Culham was a happy time with plenty of sport, during which Arthur discovered a talent for the triple jump.

After National Service, in Egypt as a Sergeant in the RAEC, was completed Arthur taught at Ridgeway Primary School, then Southcote Primary where he became Deputy Head, moved to Coley School as Head and subsequently to The Hill Primary in Caversham where he was Head until he moved to Clevedon to take up the position of Warden at the Teachers Centre in Weston-super-Mare where he remained until retirement in 1992.



Both Arthur and Adrian had attended Alfred Sutton Primary School and both sang in the choir at St Bartholomew's Church as boys and as men. Arthur became much involved with the development of musical activities in the town's schools and throughout the year would be conducting choirs and recorder groups for musical festivals.

At Weston he took the lead in many projects to improve out of school activities, notably leading the Marine Lake Enthusiasts Society which provided canoes and dinghys for local children to use. He also set up the Associates of Clevedon Residents and Rate Payers, was a Labour member of the town Council from 1983-87, led the pressure group to rebuild the town's swimming pool, was instrumental in creating the BMX track in Strode, the leading light in the reclamation of Clevedon's marine lake and heavily involved in the 1987 Clevedon Musical Festival for young people.

Arthur was blessed with a mischievous sense of humour, a ready wit and unending drive. He was a man who made things happen, a trailblazer who did not take "No" for an answer.

In retirement he bought a cottage at Mousehole which he restored, and continued to indulge his love of cooking and sailing.

He leaves his wife Linda, whom he married in 1969, and two sons, Tom and William.

Arthur Knott died on 25 October 2007 aged 78

KCB

## THE REV PREBENDARY GRAHAM FRANK HOLLEY (1945-46)

Though at School (East House) for only one year, joining from Alfred Sutton, Graham's time in GVI made a deep impression on him and he was a long time member of the Old Redingensians Association and its predecessor Club.

Together with Arthur Knott, (see obit. in this issue) and Adrian Parsons, from that inaugural form of Ray Jessop's, he trained at Culham College and taught for ten years before entering the Church. He was ordained deacon in 1961, priest in 1962 and served in parishes in Hereford and High Wycombe before becoming Vicar (and the last incumbent) of Much Marcle & Yatton (Diocese of Hereford) from 1967-1994. At Much Marcle he was Chairman of the Governors of the village School and sat on numerous committees. His service as Rural Dean of Ledbury, and Proctor in Convocation on the General Synod, led to him being presented to the stall of Putson de minore in Hereford Cathedral and becoming a member of the Greater Chapter. This endowed him with the title of Prebendary entitling him to preach annually in the Cathedral.



Graham was widely read and had a great love of the Arts, particularly enjoying 18th Century music. His wife, Eleanor, whom he married in 1963, was a professional harpist and soprano. Graham retired to Gourrock in Scotland, near his daughters, where he acted as a priest in charge at St Bartholomew's from 1997 until 2006. A Requiem Mass was held for him in Gourrock and his funeral service was at Much Marcle Church (another St Bartholomew's) where he is now interred. Because the Church was being repaired only the Chancel door could be used. This was wholly fitting as during his whole ministry at Much Marcle he had only ever entered by that door.

He is survived by Eleanor, by their two daughters Louisa and Amelia, five grandchildren and also by his brother R (Raymond) Holley OR (1945-51) whom we thank for much material for this notice.

Graham Holley died on 1 February 2008 aged 78.

KCB

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## ERIC COOMBES (1942-48)



A large congregation, including R C (Ray) Fullbrook (1942-49) former Captain of School, and other ORs, attended Oxford Road's Emmanuel Methodist Church for Eric's funeral service on 3rd January last. From his earliest years he attended the Oxford Road Methodist Church, later serving as a Church Steward, a pastoral visitor and gift aid secretary. It was central to his life.

At School he reached ScVIA and the West House Committee, gained the RLSS Bronze Medalion, House Cricket Colours and the rank of Lance Corporal in the OTC. After leaving School he played Rugby for the ORs, and his love of the sport extended to badminton, tenpin bowling in the local leagues, horse racing, Reading FC and Warwickshire CCC (he was also a Cricket Umpire and subsequently a scorer at County level. He liked to challenge the assertion "*cricket is only organised loafing*" – as most ORs surely would). More sedentary pursuits included bridge, crib and coin collecting.

His National Service was spent as a medic in the Royal Navy at Haslar, a natural progression from 1st Reading Sea Scouts (YMCA) and enlivened by the ownership of a motorbike.

He became a Public Health analyst, after studying at Streatham, and his career took him to Horlicks at Slough, Birmingham University, and then to Leatherhead to work for Sainsburys at the Food Research Institute.

At the service, donations in lieu of flowers were requested for the British Polio Fellowship, for which Eric was Treasurer for a number of years and was a carer and chauffeur to sufferers. "*He sought to live out his faith through his life*". Eric did not marry but touched the lives of many who will remember, in the words of his godson, Gordon Ralphs, "*...his dry humour and the twinkle in his eye*".

Eric Coombes died on 19 December 2007 aged 76 years.

KCB

## WING COMMANDER DEREK EDMUND DAVIES, DFC, AFC & BAR (1927-34)



The School Magazine reported in April 1943 that "*Squadron Leader DE Davies, RAFVR, has improved his brilliant record in the present War, DFC, AFC, mentioned in despatches, by receiving a Bar to the Air Force Cross in the New Year Honours List. His was the only award of this kind*". He flew 47 operational flights over enemy territory as a bomber pilot – when the odds were against surviving more than 20 trips. (There were risks on the ground as well; HM the King and Queen were dining in his Squadron Mess one day in 1941 when the airfield was bombed by a lone enemy plane. Derek had to prevent himself diving under the table as the Queen, seated opposite him, remained perfectly composed and unflinching).

Derek had spent seven years in East House, became a Lance/Sergeant in the OTC and in his final year, before Matriculation from VI Mod, he reached the School XV. Whilst at School he had seen, from the School field, aerobatics being performed by a friend of Douglas Bader, to cheer Bader up during his sojourn in Battle Hospital. Thereafter Derek was hooked on flying and during his career he was to pilot more than 80 different types of aircraft, from biplanes to jets.

When he left School he worked in an insurance company before being commissioned in 1939 (he had joined the RAF Volunteer Reserve in 1937 and learned to fly). At war's end he was CO Bomber

Command Instruction School Heavy Wing at RAF Finningley. He went to Staff College in Haifa, commanded a squadron in the Middle East, then to Hullavington, Wiltshire and then became a test pilot at Boscombe Down. He was the first serving officer to fly the first jet bomber – the Canberra. – and later formed a Canberra Wing at RAF Scampton. In 1954 whilst flying B47s in Louisiana he married his first wife Olive, an English nurse, in San Francisco.

He was hard hit by the loss of Olive in 1966, but time worked its wonders and he eventually married Gwen, in 1989, with whom he had a further 17 years of marriage.

After retirement from the RAF in 1958 he settled in Pickhill, Yorkshire where he was elected, in 1964, to Thirsk Rural Council and was for 23 years a Councillor, culminating in his Chairmanship of the Hambleton District Council. Local history was a great interest to him and he was instrumental in Pickhills' Millennium Project, a book, *Pickhill, a Village History*, a large part of which had been researched by him.

He had been told, when first asked to stand for Council, that he wouldn't get any votes in that district unless he kept pigs – so he duly acquired one, with a dozen piglets. In his subsequent career as a pig keeper he owned a pig named 'Motorboat' that he was not adverse to riding around the village.

In 1991 he was made an honorary alderman. Derek was a valued member of Pickhill church where he was churchwarden for a time.

He was noted for his quick wit and sense of humour, optimism about mankind and deep interest about the world around him. For him the glass was always at least half full and the valuable things in life did not lie in worldly goods and ostentation. "*My training in the RAF was a great expense to this country. I feel I should render something to the public in return*", he was quoted in the Press as saying 30 years ago. The country's investment was more than amply repaid.

Derek's wife Gwen died shortly after him, in January 2007, and he leaves his daughter, Emily Bianchi Bazzi, to whom we extend our sympathy, and his grandchildren, all of whom in which he took great pride.

Derek Davies died on 21 November 2006 aged 89.

KCB

## PETER JOHN SOUTH (1928-31)

Peter's School career, in West House, lasted only three years because, as was so often the case, in the genuinely hard times that so many families once had to face and so few understand today, he was needed at home.

St Peter's Church, Caversham, where Peter worshipped for sixty years and had been sidesman and PCC member, was full for his funeral service and G P (Gerald) South, OR (1957-64), Peter's son, paid tribute to the wardens and clergy and thanked Father Nicholas Cheeseman of All Saints, Downshire Square (where Peter was latterly living at the Abbeyfield Residential Care Home) for taking the service.

Peter was a natural gentleman and had an acute mind; the opportunities of an extended education would not have been wasted, it is reasonable to conclude, had he had them. Time was scarcely his own but somehow football and cricket, life long loves, were fitted in.



At 21 he found himself at War in the Royal Artillery with active service in Europe and North Africa following. He was at the forefront of D-Day (Peter was a non swimmer; the prospect of first crossing the channel and then facing the possibility of being hurled back into the sea from the beaches must have been quite terrible – something many must have thought about but simply faced up to in the line of duty and belief). He was in Palestine after the Armistice and did not return home until Gerald was six months old.

His subsequent career in the public sector was as a result of determined study at home to give his family the opportunities he wished them to have. It did not prevent him giving much time to charitable causes; the British Legion and Save the Children were close to his heart. Peter had natural administrative abilities, expressed as Treasurer and Secretary of organisations as diverse as the local bowls club and Reading School Parents Association. He took great interest in his family, which came to include grandchildren and a great grandchild.

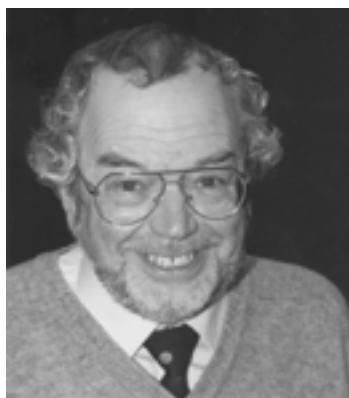
The death of his wife of long years, Elsie, who had also cared for him as emphysemia took hold, was an enormous loss, but he did not cave in, acquired an electric buggy, and, as he had done all his life *"he took it in his stride and got on with living"* – to quote his son. When he knew he had to make the change, he booked himself into Abbeyfield where he was a loved and respected resident.

Peter South died on 5 January 2008 aged 89.

KCB

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## DENNIS ALAN ROBERTS (1940-49)



Dennis was the son of Juan Roberts, a Reading Town Councillor in the 1950s, and many, no doubt, will remember the aroma of ground coffee coming from Mr Roberts splendid shop in Queen Victoria Street. At School Dennis was in East House when he left from UVA with his CSC, although he had entered 1B in the Junior School during January 1940 as a member of West. The transfer occurred in 1945.

Dennis and his wife Gene were partners in business, as in life, having set up, in their early years together, the first coin operated laundry business in Newbury; but it was as a successful entrepreneur who established an engineering business, over 30 years ago, to manufacture Robojet Water Jetting equipment that he became best known. He did not retire until he was aged 71 and now his son, Nicholas, with a co-director, continues the business. Dennis loved his garden, food and swimming, and he had an off beat sense of humour which

did not diminish in a long battle with cancer during which he was devotedly cared for by Gene and supported by a loving family. Gene and Dennis were able to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary in 2006.

Tenacity, resolution, humour and courage were all associated with Dennis and his devotion to his son Nick, his daughter Trudi and his three grandchildren was absolute. They and Gene survive him.

Dennis Roberts died on 31 January 2007 aged 75.

KCB



## DR BRIAN JAMES WAGG (1940-49)



'Jim' Wagg's time at Reading School was split neatly between East House, which he entered as a day boy in Upper II in May 1941, and as a boarder in West Wing from 1946. (All his life he kept a letter from his boarding house Master, Mr Streather, congratulating him on his School Certificate results – he held 'Stret' in high regard). Jim left in July 1948 from Sc VIA, as a house monitor, a corporal in the OTC and having played a part in the cultural life of the School.

At Birmingham University he studied microbiology, obtaining his BSc at age 20 and a doctorate at 23. After working in the dental school at Liverpool University he gained a research post with Unilever in Bedfordshire, which took him to Isleworth for 14 years and then to Port Sunlight, on the Wirral, where he stayed until early retirement in 1987.

Whilst working at Isleworth he lived for 14 years in Hurst and became chairman of the PTA at Forest (then a Grammar School) and, later, a Governor. Jim's work included clinical trials in isolated places, for instance the Greek Island Euboea and Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, where new toothpastes containing fluoride were put to the test.

His life was full and varied; he helped clear up after the East Coast floods in 1953, as a student member of a University team; he had a life long interest in Freemasonry, was a member of several lodges (and a founder member of Hennerton Lodge), was a beekeeper for over 40 years, a long time member of a choir on the Wirral (he had a great knowledge and love of music), a long term blood donor, active as a member of the British Legion, and with the RNIB for whom he tape recorded clinical articles for blind physiotherapists.

Eventually Jim and Ruth, his wife of over 50 years, moved to Suffolk near their family. He developed Cryptogenic Fibrosing Alveolitis – a rare lung condition currently without a known cure, which eventually claimed his life. He is survived by Ruth, by his son Peter (who supplied much of the material above), his daughter Sheila and six grandchildren.

Jim Wagg died on 13 July 2007 aged 76.

KCB

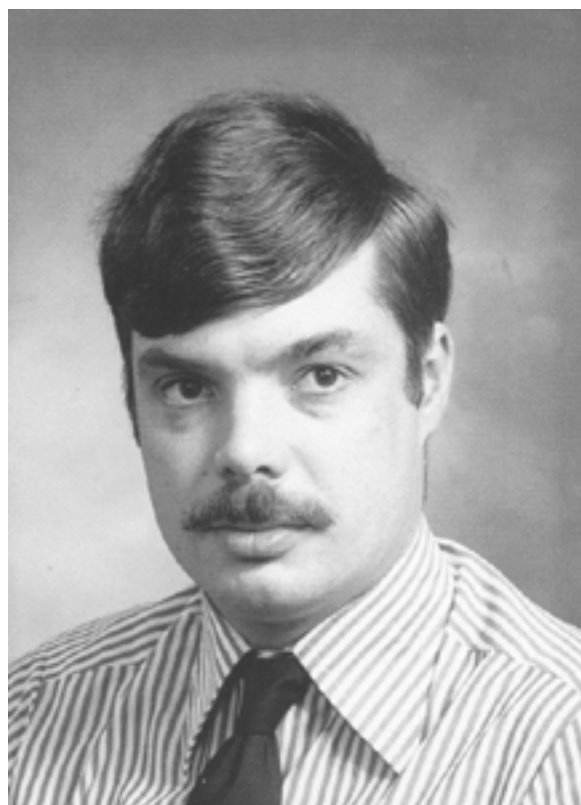
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## SIMON JAMES AMBROSE (1965 -72)

Born in Norfolk, Simon attended Norwich School before his family moved to Reading. He was in County House, became a Prefect and Captain of the Sailing Club and was Hon Sec of the Railway Society. He gained 3 A levels and left in 1972 for the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, changing his course from mechanical engineering to civil engineering and graduating BSc in 1975.

He joined Cleveland Bridge Engineering Company in Darlington, working on the construction of gates for the Thames Barrier and later on the Tyne Metro Bridge. In 1977 he was transferred to Dover and work on the new Hoverports Swingbridge. Work for the Sullam Voe oil terminal, in the Falklands and in Scotland followed, and then St Helena. Back in the UK he was granted associate membership of the Institute of Civil Engineers (AMICE). He was to have 20 years at AWRE Aldermaston.

In 1982 he bought a house in Caversham Heights and four years later he married Rosemary (divorcing in 2006 but remaining on friendly terms). He took early retirement, when still in his 40s and became self employed, working



as a civil engineer for the Welsh Highland Railway Restoration Programme, continuing his lifelong interest in such projects. An accident in 2006 led to his right leg being amputated below the knee but such was his positive attitude to life that he was driving again within 6 months and remained self employed until his untimely death, after a short illness, in October 2007.

Simon was a man of great integrity and compassion, a generous spirit who gave freely of his time to others. He was a volunteer for both Sue Ryder and Oxfam. He always had future projects in mind and his talents extended to fine cooking and the repair of vintage cars in which he was greatly interested.

He leaves his parents, Peter and Nanette (George), and many friends. We are most grateful to his mother for supplying material used in this notice.

Simon Ambrose died on 23 October 2007 aged 53.

KCB

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## **PETER MACLENNAN formerly WATKINS (1941-47)**



Peter Watkins attended Reading School from September 1941 to December 1947 when he left from Upper V A with his School Certificate.

He was a day boy in County House; a member of the Junior Training Corps (JTC) gaining his Certificate 'A' in 1946; he played for his House Rugger XV and was in the School Scout Troop from 1941 to 1944.

It was as an athlete with an exceptional talent that he made his greatest mark. He gained his School Athletic Colours in 1946 in which year he won the Long Run (Cross Country Open Championship) in 32 minutes 33 seconds; he was also 3rd in the One Mile (Open) on the School Sports Day that same year. It was very unfortunate that there was neither a long run nor sports day in 1947 owing to the extreme weather conditions that winter. However, Peter ran, in a field of 350, to come 41st in the English 3-miles Youth Championship, an outstanding



performance.

He did his National Service in the Army and then worked in the perfumery business with Max Factor/Revlon, before joining the pen manufacturer Berol, with whom he worked until retirement as Sales Manager. He changed his name by deed poll whilst living in Lyme Regis, taking the surname of his future wife Ann MacLennan. He was an ardent supporter of Leicester Tigers Rugby Club and followed athletics with great interest.

Peter MacLennan was married three times. He is survived by his wife Ann, daughter Caroline Welkin and his stepson Alex MacLennan.

Peter died on 10 January 2008 aged 77 at his home at Easton on the Hill, near Stamford, Lincolnshire.

KCB



# In Memoriam

Contributions to the obituaries of the following, which will appear in the next issue, are invited.

**H G (Gordon) Hands (1928 – 36)**

Banker & Musician

Died 3 May 2008 Aged 89

**R E (Robert) Coles (1943 – 51)**

Scientist

Died 3 June 2008 Aged 74

**C M S (Colin) Crombie (1943 – 48)**

Auctioneer & Chartered Surveyor & Cricketer

Died 9 June 2008 Aged 75

**R W (Richard) Walsh Atkins (1999 - 06)**

Student (Bristol University)

Died 27 June 2008 Aged 20

**P V (Phil) Hight (1950 – 57)**

Forensic Consultant

Died 18 July 2008 Aged 69

**D R (David) Payne (1971 – 78)**

Research Scientist and Christian Worker

Died 7 August 2008 Aged 48

**G D D (Derek) Fletcher (1940 – 46)**

Retired Police Officer

Died 21 September 2008 Aged 78

**E B (Eric) Horton (1921 – 29)**

Telecommunications Engineer

Died 23 September 2008 Aged 96

**B M S W (Bernard) Emery (1945 – 48)**

Shipbroker

Died 3 October 2008 Aged 78

**K C (Kenneth) Hinton (1922 – 31)**

Banker (Barclays)

Died 10 October 2008 Aged 94

*Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine,  
et lux perpetua luceat eis.*



## From the Editors



*CJW and KCB*

The Editors were gratified to receive a lot of praise for the last issue and know they must be doing something right – but all feedback is important and we do ask for constructive criticism please: the great danger is to fail to appeal ‘across the board’ to the oldest and youngest amongst us. So rather than just complain about what we already include – you might not like some of it, but the majority do – please tell us what else we should include, in your opinion, and the areas we might improve.

K S Mills (1942-47) (see also *Where Are They Now?*) makes a case for those who left School before they had the chance to achieve their potential and, indeed, for those who did not go to university or rise to the higher echelons of public life. One way or another this covers most of us and whilst the doings of our more distinguished

Old Boys are inevitably of interest, the majority know something of them already. It is really the relatively unsung, our friends and contemporaries from Schooldays, and with whom we have lost contact, that we want to read about – which is why we always hope people are prepared to tell us a little about their lives so far.

**Our Autumn 2009 journal will be published shortly after the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, in which, as Peter Coombs reminded us in his address at the School’s Act of Remembrance last November, nearly 1,000 former pupils of Reading School served. Many, we know, do not like to talk about their experiences but we nonetheless hope, that at this distance of time, members will provide their memories of wartime, in or out of uniform, for publication. Please send in as many as you can.**

The School has felt it necessary to mention to parents the problem of unacceptable dress and overlong hair and also for the need for boys to have a proper breakfast in the morning. Can it be that modern parents have not advanced quite as far beyond their forebears as is sometimes touted?

In the end result 31 of the Oxbridge candidates in School Year 2007-08 gained places at their chosen Colleges. A truly outstanding achievement, and a great tribute to Head of Sixth Form Mr E S Holt, BA, Scholar of Merton College Oxford – Ned Holt OR (1966-72) – amongst others.

**Each year all Year 12 (Sixth Form) boys take part in one week’s work experience. This means that 150 placements have to be found. If any of our readers are able to take a Reading School boy into their workplace for the period 9-13 February 2009, please contact Mrs Beverley Taylor, via email, [betaylor@readingschool.reading.sch.uk](mailto:betaylor@readingschool.reading.sch.uk).**

We thank Beverley Leng for her occasional assistance with copy typing during the production of the last two or three issues of this journal, and the School for providing her services freely. They can no longer do this, we are informed.

No one took up the challenge to emulate, or surpass, the Oxford letter in the last issue. Maybe Oxford University is truly without rival? Their own letter will be back in the Spring, but others? Perhaps they are not quite up to it.....



KCB/CJW

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**This issue's front cover;** the large and splendidly coloured plaque depicting the Arms of the Borough of Reading now hangs in the Administrative Office in what was once the West Wing Housemaster's sitting room.

Members may remember it, once, in the top corridor of the main block. John Bristow (HM 1980-90) had it moved to the Headmaster's office in the lower corridor and Dr Mason (HM 1990-97) moved it to its present location.

The central head is dressed as Queen Elizabeth I. John Oakes (former editor of this journal) points out that the plaque illustrated in John Man's *History and Antiquities of the Borough of Reading (1816)* is almost exactly the same, but presently we are unaware of any other examples that come so close. How the plaque came to the School we hope to be able to tell readers in a future issue.