

A monochromatic, blue-toned portrait of a man in 17th-century attire. He is wearing a dark, wide-brimmed hat, a white ruffled collar, and a dark, voluminous robe. He has a mustache and a small goatee. His hands are resting on a surface in front of him. The background is dark and indistinct.

THE OLD REDINGENSIAN

MAY 2004

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER



JOHN OAKES PRESENTING THE CLACY CUP TO CARL MACKIE
AFTER THE OR MATCH 2003

There has been only one other South House Master to be honoured with the Presidency of the Old Redingensians Association and that was John Haines. I followed him into South House and later as Chairman of the Staff Common Room and I know that the standard he set was impossibly high. I know also that he would have approved of my plans to concentrate on sport, and in particular Rugby and cricket, during this year. Tom Bucknell should have been your President this year but his untimely death robbed him of an honour I know he was relishing. His interest in Rugby 7s was in my mind when I made my plans for this year.

I propose to join with Michael Maule, the Vice President, to initiate a two year programme aimed at focussing our minds on recruiting young members from the School and from the Universities. Everyone, without exception, has mentioned that our membership is getting older. Therefore I asked the School Captain to talk to the Sixth Form Council and find out why so few school leavers join the ORs and the result was a surprise. He pointed out that very little is known about us amongst the pupils in School. We must accept responsibility for this and sort it out, otherwise the Association will wither on the vine. I ask all the senior members to forgive me and actively join me as I concentrate on this. I am publishing articles in this issue which have been written by pupils in the school and hope to distribute copies of the magazine amongst the senior forms. We cannot try to replace the School Magazine but, through the medium of the Old Redingensian, we must see that we are known and understood by the senior boys. I propose to offer past pupils now at University an event in which they can meet and participate with ORs of many generations. This will be OR Festival of Rugby to be held on 12th September on the school field.

We must do more. That is one of the reasons I invited ladies to attend the Annual Dinner. I know that there were some ORs who found that difficult to accept and I apologise to them. I need to say that it was my

idea and I take full responsibility for it. It was a success, thanks to the efforts of Brian Titchener, Mike Maule, John Illman, Chris Widows, Rodney Huggins, Peter Stevens, Ian Moore and Mary Chaplin, the Foundation Governor. There was no OR wanting to attend who did not get a place at table that night, though I admit Junior School was full to the brim. During the dinner some superb entertainment was provided by past members of the Opera who performed a repertoire of Gilbert and Sullivan for us in honour of Birdie Nightingale and Frank Terry.

This year the AGM and dinner will be held in the Blue Room at Reading University and the aim is to provide an opportunity for ORs of all ages, to meet old friends and build the esprit de corps of the Association.

In this issue of the Old Redingensian is an article by Tom Spindler, a recipient of an OR Enterprise Award and the Captain of School 2003, who spent some time in Swaziland and also an article by some pupils who, supported in part by an OR Enterprise Award, spent part of last summer in Uruguay. The stories they tell us leave us in no doubt that the money was well invested because it is experiences like this which shape leaders. Our Enterprise Award Scheme, initiated when Matt Mattingley was President, aims to encourage creativity, adventure and leadership amongst Reading School pupils. It is a small thing that ORs can do to add to the education of those who are, let us be clear, amongst the most gifted in the country. That we need leaders with integrity and judgement is axiomatic.

Closer to home we need volunteers as Councillors and Officers in the Old Redingensians Association. It is a small band of volunteers which keeps the Association going. John Illman, having completed an innovative and stylish year as our President, has taken on the role of Chairman of the Council. Michael Maule has become Honorary Secretary, in addition to holding office as our Vice President. Chris Widdows has joined me on the Editorial Board of The Old Redingensian, which adds to his already daunting work load as Honorary Membership Secretary. Brian Titchener, after many years of service as Councillor, President and Chairman, is still our Honorary Social Secretary and webmaster. Ian Moore, who is amongst the busiest members of the school management staff, also acts as our Honorary Treasurer and as a main link between the Council and the School. Rodney Huggins, Jack Holt and Simon Oliver continue to represent us on the Reading Foundation.

There are others who work immensely hard for us all. Terry Cartwright has kept OR Cricket Week going for years. In the last few years he has been joined by Mark Lyford and there are plans to expand and restore much of the old glory - with a measure of contemporary pleasure - to this quintessentially Reading School event. The problem has been that the number of ORs who play during this week has been diminishing. Some argue that it is symptomatic of the times. It may be so but, together with Terry and Mark, I have determined that we should do something about it. Council has agreed to take a long view and increase the subsidy for this event.



SOME OF THE SAVOYARDS AT THE ANNUAL DINNER
WITH FRANK TERRY CONDUCTING



RODNEY HUGGINS IN SONG

Rudolph Bissolotti has been Honorary Secretary of the Old Redingensians Golf Society for some years now and looks for more support in the future. Rudolph has been labouring with a handicap for some months, having broken an ankle which has been reluctant to mend. Reunions of a social nature have been growing in popularity. The West Sussex Reunion, which is hosted by Michael Smith with such style, is one of the hidden gems of the Association's calendar. The 50 Years On Reunion, fast becoming a tradition, now occurs each year at the Oxford and Cambridge Club and Peter Stevens has written about this year's event in this issue of the Old Redingensian.

Bob Lewis and John Vaughan have been organising OR Rugby with immense success for over a quarter of a century. We have decided, with Bob and John, that the major event for 2004 will be an OR Rugby Festival on 12th September. There will be a 7-a-side competition for the Goss and Co. Shield and the traditional OR XV v School 1st XV will also be played. Sponsorship has been offered by Goss and Co and we will have a hospitality tent, supplied courtesy of Kev Renelle, outside Junior School to keep spectators and players in good heart throughout the day. Some Berkshire referees have volunteered their services and we have extended an invitation to the President and members of Redingensians Sports Club to join us for the day. Refreshing the links between the ORs and Redingensians is essential for both parties and we hope that this event will prove a regular feature for some years to come.

The Big School Appeal was completed in 2003. Many people were involved but the two leaders, Tony Waring and John Illman, have shown us that we can do great things if we try. The initial research carried out by Stewart Jackson was crucial because he was able to show us how to mount an appeal in the first place. Ian Moore's work as Treasurer was supplemented by his watching brief on all the contracts to ensure that we got value for money and that the work was planned around the needs of the School curriculum. A small plaque will be mounted in Big School to record all contributions of £1,000 and over.

Sydney Vines wrote a marvellous article about George Keeton which challenged me to research the great events surrounding the amalgamation with Kendrick Boys' School. Whilst so engaged I realised that the Kendrick Boys' War Memorial has been rather neglected in our Remembrance Day Services. I spoke to our Chaplain, the Venerable Peter Coombs, about it and we decided that in the next Service, to be held on 14th November, he would rededicate it.

It has been a great pleasure to be the Editor of the Old Redingensian. I must hasten to thank my wife for proof reading all the copy and for managing the business side of the magazine. I know that many readers have missed the snippets of news about their contemporaries which used to appear in the OR section of the Reading School Magazine. There are a number of reasons for that omission, the main one being that I am not a past pupil of the school and do not have the contacts that Kerr and others had. At the end of this year I will be handing over the Editorship to a team headed by Mark Lyford and Chris Widdows. As with so many things in this Association, Kerr Kirkwood, who started The Old Redingensian, has been a great mentor to me and still acts as a contributing editor. It was Rodney Huggins, when he was President, who had the courage to bring the Life Members back into the fold and to support the changes I have made to the magazine.

Chris Widdows is completing a new Membership List, a task which involves huge concentration and hard labour. Council has decided that each member should have a copy of the list which will be updated regularly through the Old Redingensian. I know that you join me in thanking Chris for this.

I look forward to meeting you at Reading School during the Festival of Rugby and during Cricket Week.

FLOREAT REDINGENSIS
John Oakes

THE HEAD MASTER'S LETTER



I have attended earlier this term a meeting at King Edward VI Grammar School, Stratford-upon-Avon. It was conducted in a mediaeval room called "Big School" (which incidentally had evidently not benefited from the beneficence of the "Old Edwardians" or whatever the former students of that school call themselves). I saw the desk where William Shakespeare is alleged to have sat for his lessons and imbibed the impressive ambience of one of England's ancient grammar schools. This prompted

me to reflect on both the transitory and the enduring features of the secondary educational experience. It has also prompted my thinking for this article.

I was in these august surroundings to attend a meeting of the self-appointed group of top boys' grammar schools. My colleague at the Royal Grammar School, Lancaster, Andrew Jarman, approached the head teachers of England's twenty top-performing boys' grammar schools in the league tables of examination results. He suggested that there was a common agenda for these schools worthy of discussion. There is indeed; and this group has formed into a cohesive unit, in which robust and significant discussions can occur in an atmosphere of mutual respect, professional camaraderie and honesty. There are inevitable differences between members of such a distinguished group. It is however the common concerns that unite the group and have made all the head teachers involved agree to meet again during the next academic year. You will be pleased to know that I sat in the meeting next to Tom Ashworth, former deputy head teacher at Reading School, who is thriving at Ermysted's Grammar School, Skipton.

One of the main advantages of being in this group is the realisation that others share the same core values and also face the same challenges. It is stimulating to be amongst people who are not embarrassed by the pursuit and achievement of excellence. To be the head teacher of a selective school, and one with boarders as well, makes one feel one is suffering from a strange, non-diagnosed but virulent educational disease when amongst some educationalists. Many educational professionals obviously feel that a desire for excellence, belief in opportunity for all, and dedication to the concept of high quality state education cannot co-exist with the concept of selective schools. Often our fiercest critics have come from a selective education themselves, but see no inconsistency in seeking to deprive subsequent generations of it. What struck me was that this group of schools is seeking to preserve and develop a vision of education that is critical for the future health of our country. It is also congruent with the aspirations of the Old

Redingensians for their former school. Grammar school head teachers are attempting to retain the great strengths and traditions of England's historic and highest performing schools whilst also reflecting the changing currents and conditions and sensibly implementing change.

The best universities and the top professions have not become any easier to enter. Rather they have become more selective because they have more data to use in their desire to offer educational opportunity to the most able. As results have inexorably risen in public examinations, our current Year 12 and 13 students have to produce significant other evidence of their ability and potential, as well as a set of top examination results, if they are to beat hundreds and in some cases thousands of competitors and enter top courses. There is no way that we should do anything but provide them with the best chances of gaining entry to the best courses at the best universities. If we do not, they will be increasingly filled by the products of the better independent schools. It is the job of schools such as ours to provide these essential "add ons" and extra qualifications. These include the many extras enjoyed by Reading School students: drama, sport, music, debating. The OR 7-a-side Rugby Festival on 12 September is exactly in this spirit.

It is the aim of Reading School to offer the best teaching and learning experience available in any state school. If that is not a tall enough order, we also seek to protect and develop an unmatched range of additional opportunities. These are provided within the school day, after school and at the weekend. The range of extra opportunities on offer is staggering and even as head teacher I am often unaware of the range of achievements of our students. They compete in many

ways and have a high success rate. They learn how to win with grace, cope with losing and be generous with their gifts in helping the less privileged and accomplished. We take very seriously our target of training our students in the leadership skills that count. We need to develop skills that will be capable of being transferred, adapted and developed in one's life after school. They need to be based on core values that can sound nowadays rather out of keeping with our times: integrity, humility, courage, steadfastness, sensitivity, grace and aplomb.

I never cease to be moved by the prodigious range of highly effective inter-personal skills our students have, which they can put to good effect without appearing arrogant or self-satisfied. They have abilities to do things I was ill prepared to do after seven years in my Midland grammar school in the 60's and 70's. These would include: ability to speak interestingly and confidently in public, the ability to challenge without appearing impertinent, being creative without feeling self-conscious, being able to think on one's feet, helping others without hint of condescension, relating well to others of any age and social class.

With the support of the OR Association the whole school community will continue to try to work on our educational project of national importance, unchanged in essence over many generations and committed to the pursuit of excellence.

FLOREAT REDINGENSIS
Andrew Linnell

OUR SCHOOL

Reading School during the 1940's - A memoir by Professor Alan A Johnson OR (1940-49)

In the Summer of 1939 the storm clouds of war were gathering and it was becoming increasingly obvious that war with Germany was imminent. I lived with my mother and older brother in Beckenham, Kent, a bedroom suburb for London commuters. My father had died in 1936 from the after effects of a bout of rheumatic fever contracted during service in the Royal Naval Air Service in World War I. Understandably, my mother was nervous about the possibility of air raids should war be declared. She had been in the basement of my grandfather's bakers shop in Old Kent Road when it sustained a direct hit from a bomb tossed over the side of a Zeppelin in World War I.

In August we moved to Reading. My mother purchased a small shop which sold confectionery and tobacco products. It was on Oxford Road midway between Norcot Hill and the Kentwood roundabout. Across the street were the main line railway tracks on the line from Paddington through Reading to the Southwest and Wales. Beyond the railroad tracks was the River Thames but it was not visible from the shop. Beyond the Thames were the beautiful green hills of Oxfordshire.

My father's last words were a plea to my mother to ensure that my brother and I received a good education. The search for an appropriate school for me was therefore taken very seriously and led eventually to Reading School. There was first an interview with the Headmaster of the Junior School, Mr. Cyril Peach. This very tall and formidable gentleman asked me to read a few paragraphs and perform some arithmetic. We then proceeded up the imposing drive to be interviewed by the Headmaster, Mr. C. E. Kemp, who was considerably shorter than Mr. Peach and seemed more interested in exploring my family background than in inquiring into reading or arithmetical skills. He seemed to be impressed that my father had been an influential Freemason and told us that he also was a member of that organization.

I started at Reading School in January 1940. By then I had acquired the mandatory grey suit, grey shirt, grey socks, black shoes, school cap (to be worn squarely on the head) and school tie. Separate outfits were required for physical training (P.T.) and cricket. I had also studied and absorbed the list of stores in town, such as Woolworth's, which were considered unsuitable for the patronage of young gentlemen from Reading School. Patronage of a cinema was permitted once each term but only in the company of a parent. When school started in January 1940 I was assigned to Form IB which

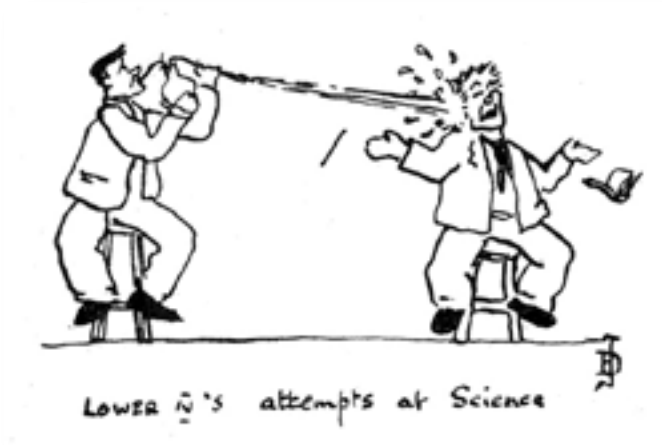
was the lowest form in the school. It was presided over by an elderly lady called Miss O'Reilly in a corrugated iron building, known as the "Old Tin Tab", adjacent to the main Junior School building. There I soon learned that my spidery handwriting was unacceptable. Miss O'Reilly had a strange habit of describing any one of her charges who was out of favour as an "elongated carrot".

In these early days of the war we day boys were assigned to one of the boarding houses for lunch. And so it was that I was assigned to West Wing and came to meet its famous House Master, Mr. W. J. Streather, on my very first day at school. Mr. Streather surveyed those present and then decreed that, since I appeared to be the smallest boy present, I could sit next to him. Little did I know that I would interact with this warm, terrifying and hilariously funny man again and again as I grew up at Reading School. He was of course known affectionately as "Strett".

The summer of 1940 brought the Battle of Britain and the death of my brother's nineteen year old best friend James Norman Spenser, a Spitfire pilot. Jim had not long left Reading School. I still have one of his books which his mother gave me as a keepsake. The Battle of Britain was soon followed by the London Blitz and, though the fires burning in London could be seen as a glow in the sky, nothing much happened in Reading. Occasionally, when the air raid sirens were sounded during the day, we all trotted across the school field to the underground air raid shelters which had been built on the pavilion side of the field.

After the London Blitz was over we had one daylight raid on the centre of Reading carried out by a single German plane. One Wednesday afternoon I met my mother in town after school. We were planning to visit the Palace Theatre where Wee Georgie Wood was performing. At that time there was a cinema on the northwest corner of the intersection of Broad Street and Queen Victoria Street. Over the cinema was a restaurant and we were about to take our seats to be served tea when the attack came. The air raid sirens had sounded but no one seemed to be paying much attention to them.

A German fighter-bomber flew at rooftop elevation across the centre of the town with guns blazing and dropped a stick of bombs. The building rocked and windows shattered as we dived under the nearest table. One bomb landed on the crowded People's Pantry in the Arcade



ONE OF THE CARTOONS BY PROFESSOR HINTON WHICH APPEARED IN THE READING SCHOOL MAGAZINE DATED JULY 1935

and killed more than a hundred people.

On a momentous day in June 1944, the main Reading to Oxford Road was clogged with military traffic and the air was full of aircraft, many of which were towing gliders. The invasion of Normandy had begun and in mid-morning the Headmaster posted a brief typed notice in the Cloisters informing an awed school of what was happening.

The study of chemistry with Strett was full of surprises. One memorable morning we arrived at the Junior Chemistry Lab to find him drawing on the blackboard with blue chalk.

"What am I drawing, boy?" he enquired.

"It looks like a flag, sir," the boy responded.

"And what kind of flag is it, boy?"

"Is it a Blue Peter, sir?" the boy answered.

"Yes, it is," said Strett. "And when does a ship fly the Blue Peter?"

"When it is about to leave port, sir?"

"That is exactly right," said Strett to a now thoroughly puzzled class.

The situation soon clarified. "This morning," said Strett, "we are going to study the PREP-AR-AYSHON OF HY DRO-GEN and, if we do not get it right, we are going to be leaving port!" There then followed the ritual of adding sulphuric acid to granulated zinc and collecting the hydrogen by bubbling it into a gas jar. Then came the exciting part. "Take cover, shall you please," commanded Strett. The class crouched behind the substantial laboratory benches and nervously watched Strett attach a long wax taper to a yardstick and then light the end of the taper. With the lighted taper held well away from the gas jar, the jar was inverted and then, immediately, the taper was brought up to it. There was a mild "pop" as the hydrogen caught fire. "Notice that the hydrogen burns quietly with a pale blue flame," announced Strett proudly. The bell rang for the next period.

There were certain boys whom Strett teased unmercifully and he usually gave them nicknames. One of those was a boy called Brooks who was nicknamed Bardolph. Having to go from our form room to two or three classes before returning we usually carried a stack of files and books with us. One morning Bardolph brought his stack of files and books to Strett's class and Strett was in the mood to tease. It appeared that Bardolph was about ready to burst into tears, but he did not. Instead, he picked up his entire stack of files and books, lifted them high in the air, and slammed them loudly onto the bench shouting "enough!" He then turned and walked silently out of the room. "Bardolph, aren't you going to say goodbye?" Strett called after him. Bardolph kept going.

On reaching the age of fourteen I joined the Junior Training Corps and was issued with a uniform, webbing and rifle, all rumoured to have been left over from World War I. On trying on the uniform at home, and proudly showing it off to my mother, I was a little chagrined when she commented that I looked rather like a sack of potatoes. It looked a little better when it had been ironed and some webbing had been added. The webbing had to be treated once a week with a light green material known as Blanco. On our first day in the Corps we were

addressed by the Commanding Officer, Captain "Bonk" Redington, M.C., who told us that the purpose of our training in the Corps was to learn how to kill the enemy.

In about 1942, I developed a spontaneous interest in playing the piano and, about a year later, started taking lessons with Charlie Davis who was the school's Senior Music Master. A year or two later a film entitled "A Song to Remember" was released. It was an account of the life and music of the great Polish composer/pianist Frederick Chopin and featured the pianist Jose Iturbé playing many of Chopin's compositions. I was enthralled and found myself scouring second-hand bookstores looking for used copies of Chopin's compositions which I could afford. As my playing advanced I was allowed to play the hymns at the chapel overflow service in Big School some mornings. Eventually I was allowed to play during the intermissions at school plays and to play the school song and national anthem at the end of the performance. These duties were shared with Andrew Bowman, an immensely gifted pianist, and others. My debut as a pianist occurred at one of the school's annual "Sing Songs" where the M.C. announced that "Johnson was going to play Chopin's Mayonnaise.....er, Polonaise."

Each year John and Roy Boulting attended the last night of the play. They were loyal and enthusiastic OR's and when they made their film "The Guinea Pig", which is about a poor boy who attends a public school, they made use of the school's personnel and facilities. A rugby sequence was filmed on the school field and some organ music was recorded in the school chapel. It was played by Fred Griffin who had by then become Senior Music Master. I was one of a small group of boys invited to spend a week at the Elstree Studios as an extra in the film. We were privileged to meet Richard Attenborough and Sheila Sims who were starring in the film. Most memorable were the doughnuts made on location each day for the stars and others.

As I moved up through the school I became increasingly focused on science and music to the exclusion of everything else. This created a lot of tension and I have lived with that to the present day. I recently wound up forty years of university research and teaching in science but remain music director of a small church. I was fortunate to spend most of my childhood in a truly great school where I was encouraged to develop in areas that were most important to me. For this I have always been grateful.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alan Johnson was at Reading School from 1940 to 1949. He went on to obtain a B.Sc. (Spec. Hons.) in Physics from Reading University, an M.A. in Physics from Toronto, and a Ph.D. in metal physics from Imperial College. He has held academic appointments at Imperial College, Brooklyn Polytechnic, Washington State University and the University of Louisville. Whilst at Brooklyn Polytechnic he was a science adviser to the Mayor of New York City.

Alan's early research was on geophysics, underwater acoustics and oceanography. During a two-year period as a Scientific Officer with the Royal Naval Scientific Service he led two research cruises on the Royal Research Ship Discovery II. His later research has been in the field of materials science and he has published more than 120 research papers in this area. His work has been recognised by election to the rank of Fellow in various professional organisations.

He retired from the University of Louisville in 2002 and now divides his time between his consulting company, Metals Research Inc., and his work as Director of Music at a church in Louisville where he plays for services and writes choral music for the church's choir, which he directs. Alan was made a Distinguished Citizen of Louisville in 1996 for his work with the homeless. He has five children, three step-children and nine grandchildren.

O. R. Ties
Silk £15

O. R. Ties
Polyester £10

From Membership Secretary:

C. J. Widdows

Cheques payable to: Old Redingensians Association

CORRESPONDENCE, NOTES & NEWS

THE KEETON ISSUE

Professor Norman Gash writes:

"When I joined the school in 1923 the amalgamation with Kendrick was ancient history; I do not think I ever heard of it. Such divisions as existed came from other causes. The scholarship boys, of whom I was one, were placed in one form for their first year (Lower IIIc) but after that were assigned to other forms on merit and very soon indistinguishable from fee-paying boys. The boarders were a different proposition. Though they constituted one house in four and were not generally conspicuous for their academic ability, they seemed to wield a disproportionate influence. Looking back, I think it was due to their social maturity, force of character, and greater aptitude for team games. At Rugby they were almost unbeatable. Mr. Keeton was right in regarding them as a valuable element in the school, although at the time (as a prejudiced dayboy) I did not think so.

What is worth recording is that my experiences in the school were remarkably free from the vices often attributed to public schools. I never encountered bullying or obscene language. The only case I know of sexual harassment of a small boy was short-lived. The culprit lasted less than a term before he suddenly and silently disappeared. Corporal punishment was not often needed. The minor sanctions of lines and drill were enough. This was not, in my view, so much because of the existence of the same, as of the generally disciplined atmosphere in the school.

My final point concerns Keeton personally. Though a remote and awe-inspiring figure for most boys, if one reached the VIth Form and had the opportunity of being taught by him, he proved to be (surprisingly) a friendly, sensible and unstuffy man with a pleasant sense of humour. The longer I have reflected on my schooldays and heard about other schools, the more I have realised how fortunate I was to have been at a school of which he was headmaster and which he had done so much to shape."

George Critchell writes:

"I have read with particular interest the article on G.H. Keeton, since he was Head whilst I was at school in 1922-27. Of equal interest was the description of the amalgamation with Kendrick. My uncle, Cecil Douglas Taylor, was a pupil there between the turn of the century and the outbreak of the Great War.

I have also read the obituary of C.R.H. Chapman, whom I can still vaguely remember after all these years. He was a year ahead of me at school but I, too, was on parade in the OTC on the school playing field that day when it was inspected by HRH the Prince of Wales. I remember it well. If, when he died, Chapman was one of the most senior ORs on the register, perhaps that could mean that (at the age of 92+) I am getting fairly senior. Who is the senior amongst us?"

C.D. Taylor served in the infantry in WWI and in the Indian Army afterwards. In 1930 he joined the staff of Sydney Grammar where he taught geography and was OC of the Cadet Corps and Chairman of the Common Room. On retirement from teaching he became the Honorary Secretary of the Old Sydneysians Association. He was recalled to the Services in WW2 in Australia as a Staff Officer. Ed.

ORs IN OZ

A somewhat unusual meeting took place of Adelaide railway station in the early hours of 20 January 2004 when two ORs of the 1922 scholarship intake met for the first time since they left school over 70 years ago.

K.C. Moore (1922-30), resident at Adelaide since 1952, met H.G. Critchell (1922-27) of Purley-on-Thames, a passenger on the Indian Pacific from Perth to Sydney. During the train halt at Adelaide the two nonagenarians (each wearing an OR tie) had much to say to each other as they mulled over a collection of old school photographs that Moore had conserved over the years.

After too brief a reunion, Moore (who was accompanied by his wife) returned home to the foothills of Adelaide, while Critchell (travelling alone) continued his journey ultimately to Melbourne for his great-niece's wedding.

BIKE 2 BORDEAUX

By the time you read this Mark Lyford (82-89) will have completed an 800km charity solo bike ride from Reading to Bordeaux and raised over £3500 for the Thames Valley and Chiltern Air Ambulance - this is the helicopter that lands on the school field and often gives a welcome break to ORs in the heat of Cricket Week. An article on the ride will feature in the Autumn Issue of 'The Old Redingensian'.



THE THAMES VALLEY & CHILTERN AIR AMBULANCE ON THE SCHOOL FIELD.
THE OR PRESIDENTS PICTURED ARE:

L to R John Illman, John Oakes, Rodney Huggins, Tony Waring, Brian Titchener and the late Ron Middleton



MARK LYFORD READY TO GO!
LISA HUGS OUR HERO BEFORE HE SET OUT FOR BORDEAUX

Mark would like to thank all ORs, staff and friends of the school who have supported him in this challenge. If anyone would like to add to the sponsorship raised so far, please call Mark on 0118 903 0800.

KIRKWOOD AWARD SUPPORTS A DURHAM UNIVERSITY THEATRE GROUP

The OR Council recently received an interesting letter from Paul Holloway who won the Kirkwood Award in 2001. He is currently studying drama at Durham University and for a year is running a theatre company which is producing *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Part of his £250 award will go towards the hire of a theatre for the production. His company is called "This Theatre Co".

THE OR DINNER 2003

The principal guests at the Annual Dinner held in Junior School on Saturday 29th November 2003 were Dr. David Owen OR (79-86) and his wife Arlie and Dr. Martin Parsons OR (63-70) and his wife Jo. Dr. Owen is the Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow at the Cambridge Institute of Medical Research. His research work is concerned with cell membranes. Dr. Parsons is a senior lecturer at Reading University. He has recently been appointed Director of the new Research Centre for Evacuee and War Children Studies at Reading University and he is the editor of the journal 'War Children'. Paul Holness, the publisher, and his wife Barbara were the personal guests of the President. They had hosted a book launch for 'Men Such As These' by John Oakes and Martin Parsons in Big School on the preceding evening and had donated a substantial cheque in respect of the royalties on 'Old School Ties' to the Big School Appeal. The Foundation Governor, Mary Chaplin, and her husband, Professor Chaplin, were also present.

MICHAEL MAULE (56-59)

Michael was elected as Vice President at the AGM. He has also undertaken the responsibility of Honorary Secretary for 2004. We are seeking an OR who feels strongly about the Association to replace him as Honorary Secretary at the end of the year. At School Mike was a School Prefect, Captain



MICHAEL MAULE

of School Athletics and won Rep. Colours for Rugby, cricket, tennis and athletics. The Maule family has a Reading School heritage. Mike's father, grandfather, godfather, uncles and, more recently, son have all been pupils. Mike is busy with his consultancy which specialises in headhunting, management recruitment and training.

A NEW POST FOR JOHN OUGHTON (63-71)

A government press release informs us that John Oughton will take over as Chief Executive of the Office of Government Commerce. Reporting jointly to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor, John will play a key role in promoting both government procurement and efficiency across the public sector. With his fellow OR the Rt. Hon. Andrew Smith MP, Secretary of State for Works and Pensions, he appears to have been charged by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with the axing of a number of Civil Service posts.

John was Captain of School in 1969-70 and went on to University College Oxford before joining the Civil Service. He was Director of Procurement Policy in the Ministry of Defence and from 1993 was Head of the Government Efficiency Unit. After May 1997 he worked with No. 10 and the Treasury on the Comprehensive Spending Review. From 1998 to 2003 he was the senior civilian responsible for the modernisation of procurement in the Defence Logistics Organisation.

John lists his recreations as squash, tennis and travel as well as watching Tottenham Hotspurs Football Club and Middlesex County Cricket Club. He will need some relaxation in view of the political pressure now exerted by the main parties on the matter of Civil Service manning levels!

WESTMINSTER ORs

Whilst Lord Roper remains in his post as Liberal Chief Whip in the House of Lords, our other Westminster ORs have been shuffled or promoted to new posts. Andrew Smith will have been observed on TV frequently enough for us all to know that he is now the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. Damien Green is now Shadow Secretary of State for Transport and Oliver Heald is Shadow Leader of the House. Mark Field has been promoted under the new Leader of the Opposition to Shadow Minister for London. He has agreed to be a member of the OR Enterprise Awards Board.

DUNCAN WHITWELL

An e-mail from Duncan Whitwell reads: "I have just finished my training in Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery at Oxford. However I am sub-specialising further in the treatment of bone and soft tissue cancer which entails further training before I start consultant practice next year. I am going to Australia for a year to work in Brisbane and Melbourne and then returning via specialist centres in New York and Boston. The family, Rose, my wife and our two kids, Maddie and Jamie, are all excited about it and enjoy the outdoor life.

Chris (Chris Whitwell 82-89) has emigrated to Australia with his Australian wife and works for the Australian Wheat Board. He lives in Melbourne but as the office 'pom' he has been given the job of selling wheat to Iraq. He has had a few tough business trips!"

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SPORT

THE SCHOOL RUGBY SEASON 2004



SUCCESS!

L to R. AMEET GHATAHORA, CARL MACKIE, NICK BURGESS,
DAVID SPINDLER, JAMES BATEMAN

The season started in hot sunshine and on baked grounds. Both the Old Boys' game and the pre-season squad sessions against Abingdon were cancelled. The team's training was limited to semi-contact and handling work, so it was with some apprehension that the team headed to the watered pitch at St George's, Weybridge for the first competitive game of the season. The team looked good in moments and essentially managed to dominate play for large periods due to some intelligent play from the captain and fly half Gareth Duncan. A comfortable win was coupled with the first look at the defence that was to be so important as the season progressed.

Following three seasons of success, only losing in the later stages of the Daily Mail Cup, the squad decided that the friendlies could be sacrificed in order to give full attention to the Cup. This decision looked like a major error following the next game in which the team narrowly beat a Shiplake side that should not have caused them any problems. A re-think was required to help kick start the team's progress and to help set the tone for the rest of the season.

The first Daily Mail Cup game was a Second Round draw against the unknown quantity of John Hampden School, High Wycombe. This game allowed the team to show off their attacking capabilities and lay the foundation of what would become the Cup Squad for the season. Good performances from James Britton (Hooker), Luke Field (2nd Row) and Chris Tucker (scrum half) laid the foundations for the backs to use the space created which led to a comfortable 55 - 0 win on home ground.

The next game took the team away to Dauntseys School. It was at this first away match hurdle that many strong teams had fallen in the past. The long coach journey worked in our favour as we began match preparations on the coach. The opposition possessed a strong pack and good rugby knowledge that gave the Reading team some problems but the handling skills of the whole team undid the Dauntseys outfit. This coupled with some outstanding defence, not least by Gareth Duncan, prevented any reply. A solid away win on a difficult ground gave the team the confidence required to ignite their season.

Following a number of knocks due to the hard ground, the selection committee decided to rest a number of players and give some younger squad members a game against Windsor Boys' School. Although the game resulted in a loss (the first time on the front field since 1999), more positive points could be taken out of this game than any other game played so far. Perhaps the most important was a determination not to let anyone score soft tries against us again. We also found a number of young players who stepped up to be counted and they were to be important members of the team as the season progressed. In particular Bob Halsall, Philip Jones and Jonathan Fulwell impressed.

The Fourth Round of the Cup was to be an away game at Bristol Grammar, now a major rugby school on the top circuit with regular fixtures against Millfield, Clifton College and Marlborough. This was clearly going to be a major test for the team. Training had gone well in the days running up to the game and there was a belief running throughout the team. A long warm up in the dense fog hanging over Bristol gave the pitch an atmosphere that only heightened the team's determination. The aim was to prevent them from scoring and to take the opportunities that we created. We were looking to piece together all the skills acquired from training and punish the opposition at any possible time. However, the game was not to follow the game plan as both sides battled to gain any real pattern. Reading scored an early penalty but could not get the ball to move through the midfield efficiently. The significantly larger Bristol pack began to allow the home team to dominate territory. They set up camp in the Reading 22 for 80% of the second half. Attack after attack was met by powerful tackles time after time as the Reading players hit well above their weight. The outstanding defence supported by both the Springer brothers (ORs) never looked like letting in a score. At the final whistle the score remained Bristol 0 - 3 Reading.

The next challenge laid down was that of Exeter away. After a short and comfortable train journey down, the team began focusing whilst walking from the station to the ground. The early exchanges were all in Reading's favour as James Batemen came close to breaking through their defensive line on a number of occasions. All the early pressure was on Exeter as some good defence meant that they became bogged down in their own 22. First blood went to Reading as Olly Hawes pounced to score an opportunist try which came from the pressure that was being put on Exeter's 9/10 combination. The Reading forwards did well to dominate an opposition pack that was huge in comparison. After two penalties from fly half Gareth Duncan and two tries from Exeter the game was up for grabs at 10-13 to Reading. Reading held on after another Bristol like barrage of attacks at the line thanks to Olly 'tackle everyone' Hawes. The determination and discipline shown by all members of the team, especially Phillip Heathfield (who was introduced to each and every one of the opposition pack's studs in one sitting), was awesome.

The team was rewarded with a home clash against local rivals RGS High Wycombe. In perhaps the perfect conditions for rugby, Reading School 1st XV stepped onto the pitch for the biggest game in the school's history in front of around 400 people. The early initiative went to Reading. After a number of charging runs from Luke Field and James Batemen gave good field position, penalties were awarded and slotted to give Reading a 12-3 lead approaching half time. After more poor discipline from the opponents, Reading kicked for the corner to set up a lineup deep in the RGS 22. From the resulting catch, by the in-form Phillip Heathfield, and drive, James Britton appeared from



READING WIN THE LINEOUT
THE DAILY MAIL CUP MATCH AGAINST CAMPION
THE SUCCESSFUL 'JUMPER' IS PHILLIP HEATHFIELD

under a rolling maul to score the try Reading had been searching for. The conversion was added by Duncan and Reading took a lead of 19-8 into the second half. The second half began at a terrific pace with RGS attacking at all angles. Reading had only rare chances to attack as the opponents continued to pile on the pressure. Some excellent box kicking by Chris Tucker did, however, force Wycombe onto the back foot. An RGS penalty cut down the lead but some punishing tackles from Carl Mackie, coupled with the now customary 'flying head tackle' by Nick Burgess prevented them from getting any closer until the final minutes. In the dying minutes, after intense pressure, the Reading defence finally opened up to allow RGS to score wide and convert the try. This was too little too late for RGS and Reading had done enough to pull off the greatest victory in the history of Reading School 19-16.

Now fearless of anybody, Reading were drawn against previous winners of the cup, Campion School. Whereas the Wycombe game had the perfect conditions, this game had the opposite. It was a blustery, cold and wet afternoon, which hampered Reading's original game plan

but Reading quickly adapted to the conditions. Campion managed to gain the upper hand early. Some aggressive and powerful forward play by the much larger pack sucked in the defence to give Campion a 5-0 lead. On a frustrating day Reading got their noses in front with two penalties after some excellent work by the forwards. At 6-5 Campion hit back with another try from a sustained period of pressure late in the second half. Reading fought bravely and, on a dry day, the half breaks made consistently by the likes of Darius Williams, Will Hearsey and Phil Jones would have surely been capitalised on. Campion did well to close out the win but Reading went out with their heads held high.

After being written off by many at the start of the season, the team used this to fuel their desire to go further in all areas of the game. As the season grew, the nearly 30 individuals that started the season bonded into a tight, hardworking group of players that moulded into the most successful Reading School team ever.

SOCCER

READING v READING SCHOOL

As originally played on King's Meadow 21st February 1872
Re-enacted Sunday 19th October 2003



KINGS MEADOWS 19TH OCTOBER 2003

L to R - S. Beavon, A. Stock, D. Downs, O. Hawes, H. Hoare and
A. Walder (Reading Football Club wore the hooped shirts)

Over 131 years ago the first ever match played by Reading Football Club took place on the Reading Recreation Ground. It was against a team from Reading School and resulted in a 0-0 draw. To support an exhibition in the Reading Museum called "Homes of Football" a re-enactment of the first match was staged under the laws first introduced by the Football Association in 1863. It lasted for 90 minutes and there were 13 players a-side wearing, as far as possible, a fair copy of the original kit. There were two umpires, one from each side, to see fair play. A player was allowed to catch the ball in flight and if he did so and immediately made a mark with his boot he gained a free kick. In accordance with the amendment made to the 1863 laws in 1865, a tape was suspended between the goal posts.

The following article appeared in the Reading Evening Post on Wednesday 22nd October 2003. It was written in the style of 1872 by Flagwaver, the Evening Post Correspondent at the match, who was in fact Nigel Sutcliffe OR (47-55).

King's Meadow witnesses an admirable game of football

School hand out an old fashioned lesson to the town's hoopsters Reading Football Club v Reading Grammar School

A capital game of football ensued at King's Meadow Recreation Ground on Sunday afternoon in the presence of a very large concourse of persons, the respective sides being the newly formed Reading Football Club and Reading Grammar School.

The latter played in the first instance towards the Great Western and South Eastern Railway Stations; thus they enjoyed the benefit of a cold and blustery north-easterly blowing in from the Chiltern Hills and this agency provided the team with much internal territory.

The ball was set in motion several minutes after the advertised time of two o'clock and play soon became very warm.

Before many minutes had elapsed Hoare of the School completed a plucky rush with a pretty shot which evaded the hapless custodian of the goal.

Some judicious 'middling' of the bladder by the pupils from the Erleigh Road seat of learning resulted in a protracted scrimmage in

the jaws of the Town fortress, which enabled Walder to add another point.

Exceedingly fast play with no quarter asked nor given marked the resumption of hostilities and Grey came down the field at a rattling pace for the Town side, who were performing well in the face of the bullies.

School were proving formidable antagonists and the Town colours were lowered again by Underhill whose shot from a considerable distance went under the tape.

The School citadel was at last toppled by dint of great exertions by the hoopsters when Brant launched a hefty punt and prevented their column of the score sheet remaining virgin.

When 'no time' was called, the School had won the battle by three goals to one goal and deserved the hearty plaudits of the round-ball game enthusiasts fringing the greensward.

Play throughout seemed of a sporting nature; there were few free kicks through vexatious and unmeaning calls of 'hands' and the post of umpire was of absolute sinecure.

Reading Football Club: M. Brailli (back), S. Narancic, S. Tanswell (half-backs), J. Brooks, G. Griffin (sides), K. Brant, R. Saunders, J. Keen, G. Friel, D. Downs, R. Titford, S. Beavon, S. Waite (forwards), D. Lovegrove, A. Gray (rolling substitutes)

Reading Grammar School: O. Glithero (back), A. Stock, W. Alston-Grenier (half backs), S. Underhill, G. Moses (sides), S. Connor, C. Tucker, D. Taylor, M. Jubb, M. Dawes, E. Holt,

O. Cussen, H. Hoare (forwards), S. Krauze, T. Glendinning, M. Bishop, J. Bonneywell, A. Walder (rolling substitutes).

Umpires: Mr. R. Curry (Caversham) and Mr. T. Glendinning (Reading).

NOTE: There was also a foot-ball match played under newfangled Association rules which Reading FC won by four goals to three. Marksmen for the victors were Friel (2), Gray and Brant, while the reply for the School came from Dawes, Walder and an unknown opponent believed to be Downs.

FOOTBALL AT READING SCHOOL

By Ned Holt, Senior Master, Reading School

Some reflections on the attitudes surrounding the game of football in Reading School from 1886 to the present day

It may come as a surprise to some that Reading School pupils were playing football enthusiastically at the end of the nineteenth century. The game against Reading Football Club was just one of a varied fixture list, including adult teams, Oxford Colleges, other schools, and someone called 'Reading Temperance Forwards', whose temperance seems to have made them formidable opposition, but may account for the fact that they no longer exist. The school's magazines of the time describe the players in the familiar terms of the late nineteenth century: "Cliff L., useful wing forward, dribbles and middles well, capital shot."

There is little sign of conflict between football and rugby in those years; in fact in many magazines they are both referred to as "football", "soccer" or "socker" being used to make the distinction. An ex-pupil called J.A.S. Tulloch went on to play for Woolwich (does this mean the Arsenal ??) in 1883, in both games.

Rugby seems to have ousted football more for practical reasons than any other as thirty boys were kept occupied rather than twenty-two. There is certainly no sign of the sense that one was a more suitable game for young gentlemen. By the years most ex-pupils will remember, however, football had become frowned on as a socially inferior activity. Why was this? It would be easy to say that football was already becoming associated with unsporting behaviour, except for the fact that teachers more often expressed their hostility to relative trivia such as footballers' hairstyles, or to their habit of wearing their shirts outside their shorts. The boys challenged all this in a whole variety of ways of course, kicking tennis balls around the quad whenever possible, or devising ludicrous aquatic heading games when they were supposed to be playing water polo. By the 1970s teachers who disliked football and wished to discourage it had made that fatal tactical mistake; they had given the game a faintly subversive status.

Already, however, there were seeds of change. When a group of enthusiastic pupils formed a team out of school, a team of teachers were happy to play them at Morgan Road after school. To the boys' mortification the teachers won easily, and some showed considerable skill; Tony Davis, as one might have guessed, turned out to be an annoyingly good left winger, shirt well tucked in of course. At times his hair style gave him a resemblance to Bobby Charlton. After this time games between staff and students became for many years an annual event. However it was not until John Vaughan took charge of the school games department in the 1980s that talented players were genuinely encouraged to play representative football games in their own time. One of these was Ted O'Leary, full-back for the school rugby team, and centre back for Reading F.C. youth and occasionally reserve teams. He came back into school one morning after trying to mark Steve Archibald, who was recovering from injury in Spurs reserves. An unequal contest, apparently. Another talented young player left school for an apprenticeship under Maurice Evans at Oxford United.

It was John Vaughan's achievement to re-establish rugby as a genuinely popular game of choice in the school, which enthusiastic footballers

were keen to play alongside playing in local football leagues on Sunday mornings. Now boarders were as likely to be seen throwing a rugby ball around in their free time as to play football. Once this had occurred, football ceased to be seen as a threat to school sport.

The man who finally re-established football at the school was Mark Bishop, a Maths teacher (and Liverpool fan) who was at the School in the late 1990s. Starting with a little recreational football as an afternoon alternative for senior pupils who did not want to opt for other sports, he moved on to organise a fixture or two, and then to enter the Berkshire Schools' League, with two teams competing by the time he moved on to another school. Other teachers have kept it going, but it is to Mark that the boys owe the chance to play competitive matches again. He played in the commemorative match at King's Meadow; if you were there he was the one of the teachers who was any good. His work has been carried on by Matt Dawes and Alan Walder. This year the School 2nd XI is in the play-off final of the Berkshire League.

Football is now re-established as part of the School's games activities. It has not undermined the position of other sports, the great fear of the sixties and early seventies. This too is a reflection of John Vaughan's success in directing school sport. It sits alongside strong rugby and hockey teams, indeed arguably the first years of official school football saw unprecedented successes for the teams in the other two winter sports. Some students play in all three of these sports, others have played for the football teams having never been in any school team before. There are lots of thirty, forty, and fifty year old ex-pupils who will envy them.

THE OR FESTIVAL OF RUGBY 2004

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ENTERPRISE AWARDS

BOLIVIA 2003 WORLD CHALLENGE EXPEDITION

Between the twentieth of July and the twentieth of August 2003, a group of seven students, a teacher, Daniel Swan, and a leader, Alistair Beeley, embarked on an expedition to Bolivia. What follows is an account of our time in that country; the trials and tribulations, the highs and lows, the mishaps and the adventures. Our expedition began on a perfect summer's evening at Reading School as we prepared in quiet anticipation for quite possibly the biggest adventure of our lives to date. After three gruelling flights, with a testing ten-hour stop in Sao Paulo, we finally arrived at our destination.

SANTA CRUZ

Our first steps on Bolivian soil took place in the city of Santa Cruz. Tired and weary from the previous day's travel we made our way to our accommodation, the pleasant 'Residencial Bolivar', complete with large airy rooms, complimentary breakfast and a family of resident toucans. Santa Cruz, the gateway to many of Bolivia's exceptional national parks and the Amazon basin, turned out to be (against many of our expectations) a vibrant and bustling city. Steeped in near constant sunshine the city felt like a dizzying clash between colourful Hispania and the developing world. Also boasting the best nightlife in Bolivia, Santa Cruz was the perfect place to relax between our exciting and exhausting adventures in the Andean foothills. We spent much of our time here exploring the city's labyrinthine markets, which sold everything from toys to toiletries in no particular order. If for some reason you could not find what you were looking for, chances were some unscrupulous street trader would approach you with the goods you had in mind (plastic bow and arrow señor?). The city provided the perfect laid back introduction to our expedition, from lazing around in the beautiful main square to sampling some of the riches the country had to offer, and when the jet lag and culture shock got too much for us we could always crash out in the Irish pub (minus Guinness) just next to our accommodation.

Having acclimatised in Santa Cruz, it was time to undertake the next phase of our expedition. On the 23rd of July we were picked up by two, just about roadworthy, taxis, and began the three-hour journey from Santa Cruz to the small town of Samaipata. The journey took us from 440m to 1660m above sea level and so it gave us the chance to witness just how quickly the landscape could change in this diverse country. When in Samaipata we travelled to the La Vispera camping ground which would act as our base for the project phase and our trip to the Amboro National Park. After a good night's sleep we travelled to San Juan de Rosario, a tiny village which would be our home for the duration of the project phase. Our transport was the most interesting so far - an open topped lorry! It meant that we had a spectacular view of the mountains around and also fell about the lorry as we sped along the very bumpy track!

REPAIRING A SCHOOL

A little shaken we rolled into the village, which looked largely deserted. A few curious faces began to peer out of the doorways and the school Headmaster, along with a few of his associates, soon greeted us. This 'first contact' between the locals and us 'westerners' was a memorable experience as some friendly locals began mixing with us, while others held back, reserving their judgement. However, after a while and with a little help from the Mayor of Samaipata, Peter, we were having great fun trying to get to know the locals and laughing at each other's attempts to communicate.

The communication between the locals and ourselves was difficult at first, as they only spoke Spanish and we had very little knowledge of the language. After only a few days, however, our Spanish had improved dramatically and we were able to play sports, tell them a bit about England (with the help of some maps!) and ask them about their lives.

Over the next 3 days of the project we undertook many activities in an attempt to

repair the school. The first was to get sand for the cement mix. We went off in the same lorry that we had arrived in and stopped in the middle of a river upstream from the village. A little confused but willing to help, we jumped in and began shovelling sand from the riverbed into the lorry. This was, in my view, one of the best parts of the expedition. Despite how trivial shovelling sand may seem, it really helped to bring us and the local people together.

Our other activities over the four days included lime-washing walls, sanding down, repairing and varnishing desks and chairs, and planting trees in the schoolyard. As our time



in the village progressed we had more and more fun teaching the local children how to play cricket and other sports (some of which we had to adapt for the environment!). On the final day the locals challenged us to a football match and so we put our boots on and ran round a divot filled patch of grass for forty-five minutes. Despite being extremely tiring because of the altitude, this was great fun and brought our time in the village to a pleasant and exhausting end.

All of the team enjoyed their time in San Juan and for some it was the best part of the expedition. It showed us how rewarding volunteer work can be and highlighted some of the major cultural differences between our peoples, which we learned to work around and adapt to each other.



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TREKKING IN THE ANDES

Roughly one week after coming to Bolivia, on the 28th July we began the first day of our trek in the misty Cloud Forest of the Amoro National Park. This, as one would expect, is quite simply a forest, situated at about 2000m, which is usually covered by a blanket of clouds. However, during our three-day stay we were lucky to have no clouds obscuring our views. The jungle was amazing and there were some wonderful sights to be seen. As we trekked through the jungle we saw a jaguar footprint, some pre-Incan grinding stones and pottery, a rodent and an Amazonian vulture. Later in the day we set up camp and sat in a clearing for half an hour looking for wild guinea pigs. Unfortunately we saw none. In the evening, once we were plunged into darkness, we went on a night trek. We climbed up a bit to gain some height, allowing us to sit on a hill looking over the park now doused in starlight. We saw a few shooting stars and found the Southern Cross. This is the star constellation that points towards the most southern point in the sky and so can only be viewed in the southern hemisphere! This was a seminal moment. We were thousands of kilometres from home, alone in the middle of a cloud forest. This was what World Challenge was all about.

The following day we went trekking deep into the depths of the forest. We started the day armed with machetes given to us by our guides to make our way through the jungle. Throughout the day we did a few activities. We climbed a fairly high tree using the vines that swamped its trunk, swung on some vines and did some Tarzan impressions and went

for a bath in the stream that was really, really, really cold! The team constructed a bridge over the stream but I do not feel we used the most environmentally friendly ways of obtaining materials (cutting down whole (small) trees). We went back to the camp and looked for guinea pigs, again with no luck. Unfortunately in the evening it was cloudy and started to rain so we did not go on a night trek. Instead, we sat round the campfire drinking rum and tea (if I am allowed to say that!).

On our final day we woke up and descended a really steep slope to go coffee bean picking. In the area around the coffee bushes we found a dead rodent that had had all its blood sucked out. Nice! Most of us took a picture of it to make up for not seeing any wild guinea pigs. Finally we climbed back out of the park and returned to the campsite in the nearby village.

The journey from Santa Cruz to La Paz would take us up from the border of the Amazon basin, at a few hundred metres above sea level, to the wide barren expanse of the Altiplano, a gigantic plateau cradled by the Andes, averaging a height of four thousand metres above sea level. A testament to the sheer diversity of the country, our journey took us across sweeping plains, through misty cloud forests, and up into the majestic heights of the Andes mountains. After an overnight stopover in the city of Cochabamba we drove on to our destination, La Paz. The southern approach to the city took us through the poverty stricken slums of El Alto and finally into the capital itself. Nothing could prepare us for the spectacular view into the city, a view that we would be treated to again and again on our excursions out of the city, never quite the same but always stunning.

La Paz stands out as one of the most unique and diverse capitals in the world. Nestled deep in a huge canyon and crowned by the mighty Andes, it is a sprawling mixture of cultures and contradictions. La Paz was our main base during the long and challenging trekking phase of the expedition, providing a place to relax as well as a place to organise the necessary transport, food and preparations. La Paz is actually the unofficial capital of Bolivia. The title of official capital belongs to the city of Sucre, further south. La Paz, because of its proximity to Lake Titicaca and Peru is the epicentre of Bolivia's tourism industry. There was a multitude of souvenir and gift shops centred around the 'Calle Sagarnaga' or 'Gringo Alley' as it is sometimes known. La Paz is also famous for its markets, the notorious 'Mercado Negro' or black market, selling a range of bootlegged goods, and the 'Mercado de Hechiceria' or witches market, selling all kinds of good luck charms and herbal remedies. Mercado de Hechiceria provided a not always welcome assault on the senses; think 'desiccated llama fetuses' and a strange pungent minty smell, the origin of which was not entirely clear. Many of our free rest days in La Paz were spent exploring museums and churches. The sheer range of cultures meant we were never bored between treks. Articles of authentic Bolivian clothing, ponchos and Inca hats soon became a staple part of our wardrobe, while the mass purchase

of 'Charangos' (a small, highly decorative guitar) meant our room was always the noisiest in the hotel. Our evenings in La Paz were spent becoming regulars at a nearby restaurant, 'El Lobo's', the setting for our very last meal in Bolivia as a group.

Few sights can match the early morning mist rising through the jagged valleys of the Andes. Our trek along the Inca road to Taquesi was an unforgettable experience, beginning in the bare inhospitable mountains and continuing over a pass and down into the Yungas, the fringes of the Amazon rain forest. Adapting to the trekking lifestyle was the main task that confronted us, as we would have to really push ourselves on the much longer Apolobamba trek. This meant learning to force ourselves out of our tents on freezing mornings, packing our equipment quickly to avoid trekking in the heat of the day, experimenting with our cooking skills over a stove which takes practically 15 minutes to boil water, and even involved learning where to sit on the ground without getting dozens



of tiny prickles stuck in your legs. I think what hit most of us was the space which lay around us and the thought of being days from the nearest village with a bus service which then took hours to reach the nearest town. Out there in the Andes there were no signs of civilisation apart from the ancient Inca llama-trodden path we followed and the ubiquitous football pitches that any self respecting Bolivian seemed to possess - even if there was no one to play!

The last 'proper' phase of our expedition before rest and relaxation was a formidable five-day trek over the 'Cordillera Apolobamba', a remote mountain range northwest of La Paz, located on the Bolivian-Peruvian border. Our various travel guides and the World Challenge organization had informed us that this was one of the best mountain treks in Bolivia and that it would prove to be the highlight of our month abroad. The starting point of the trek was the remote mountain town of Pelechuco, which we reached after a rough, cold, eight-hour long drive from La Paz. The pouring rain we were greeted with failed to dampen our spirits but sickness meant that we started the trek a day later than planned, so we set out with a lot of ground to make up.



The trek involved crossing a total of four high passes, all exceeding four thousand metres above sea level. Our guide for the trek, Manuel, took us up to the first high pass, past a beautiful lake and into the spectacular valley below. The descent eventually took us to our campsite, where we spent the night half-freezing to death and courting the attention of some curious locals. The second day did in fact prove to be the high point of the expedition, as well as the most tiring! We were guided up and up through the mountains in a long and difficult ascent until we were greeted with the sight of the 'Apacheta Sunchuli', a full five thousand and one hundred metres above sea level. Months of preparation and training paid off when we reached the pass, as we were faced with the most breathtaking scenery yet, an experience only made more memorable and unique by the awesome sight of a huge Andean Condor gliding silently overhead. The third day proved to be just as eventful. We crossed the third high pass at four thousand nine hundred metres during mid-morning. The afternoon consisted of



a hair-raising descent down a near vertical scree slope and a gruelling trek up to the last pass at four thousand eight hundred metres. Shortly afterwards we made camp for what would be the last time and spent the night finishing off the rations we had saved, which proved easier said than done! The last day was taken up by a considerably easier trek to our destination, Charazani. The route took us out of the Cordillera and to the end of the trail, where there were some thermal baths waiting for us. We spent the rest of the afternoon

relaxing, until our bus to La Paz arrived. The journey provided a fitting final act. A stunning sunset over the mountains and a jaw-dropping descent into the light-filled canyon of La Paz brought to a close what had, for many of us, been the experience of a life-time.

LAKE TITICACA

Copacabana Beach, that most legendary Brazilian place, is actually named after the beautiful beach at Copacabana on the shores of Lake Titicaca. This town is as close as you can get to Brighton in Bolivia. The popular holiday town attracts wealthy Bolivians from La Paz and is said to have the most perfect year-round climate. Nowhere, except perhaps in La Paz, is western tourism more obvious. Most people here speak some English and restaurants advertise full English breakfasts - there are even some very obvious American tourists wandering the 'authentic' market stalls.

It is clear why they come here though. The town is beautiful and surrounds a perfect white Moorish style cathedral, built on a spot held sacred for hundreds of years as an Inca centre for worship. Outside the cathedral's walls, cars, trucks and lorries are all blessed and showered with confetti and ribbons. Catholicism in Bolivia is vibrant, colourful and even kitsch. Various religious stalls sell model cars and trucks for blessing, icons and religious jewellery. It's another world to the witches market of La Paz and yet somehow it seems all too familiar - as if the Catholic faith is almost pagan in its worship of idols and charms. Copacabana is just the starting point for all the classic excursions on Lake Titicaca. Boats leave the peaceful town and take visitors to the Inca ruins situated on the two main sacred islands of the lake, the islands of the sun and moon. The Inca faithfully believed that it was on these islands that the sun and moon were born and thus they became the sacred hub of the empire. The ruins today are a testament to all that fascinates people about the Inca. On the island of the sun a large stone slab propped up on stone blocks is said to be the sacrificial altar to the gods and a flight of steps elsewhere is said to lead to the fountain of eternal youth. The history and beauty of Lake Titicaca are immense and overpowering - no wonder then that it's a popular place. Our advice is, go there now before the coach tour groups and cheap and cheerful hotels over-run the place.



DRINKS WITH THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR

After a long ride back from Copacabana we spent our last full evening in La Paz having drinks with the British Ambassador, a brief but much appreciated moment of high class among memories of freezing tents and cold damp hostels. The next morning was spent rushing about La Paz, trying desperately to cram as many souvenirs as we could into our rucksacks. As we left the city and as the plane took off all we could do was reflect on our achievements and what, quite simply, had been one of the most incredible, awe-inspiring experiences of our lives.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Old Redingensians Association for helping us to raise the copious sums needed to take part on this trip of a lifetime. While we have tried to communicate the sheer amazement and enjoyment of the expedition in this article, the valuable rewards and memories of taking part have proven impossible to put down on paper. We hope you accept our gratitude and that you may continue to help many more Reading School boys take part on these incredible, life-changing experiences.

Thank you
James Graemer,
Thomas Bridgen, Jonathan Payne,
Peter Ocampo, Richard Taylor,
William Britton, George Fraser-Harding

Daniel Swan (Master)
Alistair Beeley (Expedition Leader)

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2004

During the service the Venerable Peter Coombs, the OR Chaplain, will rededicate the Kendrick Boys' School War Memorial which is on the north wall of our chapel.

SUNDAY 14TH NOVEMBER IN READING SCHOOL CHAPEL

(By kind permission of the Head Master)

Please be seated by 10.30 a.m.

Refreshments in Junior School after the service

"AN HUMBLE AND A CONTRITE HEART"

DIARY OF AN UMHLUNGU

By Tom Spindler Captain of School 2003

“So why Swaziland?” people always ask me when I tell them I spent over 3 months of my gap year in a tiny kingdom that few people have heard of, let alone could point out on a map. The truthful answer is that it was a total accident. I was originally placed in Lesotho but was informed a few months before leaving that the country had become too dangerous and was asked to consider Swaziland instead. As I’m sure you can imagine, my parents were both tremendously relieved and quite alarmed by the last minute change, but we were all quickly resolved to the idea of my going to Swaziland. So it was that, on the 4th September 2003, I landed at Matsapha International Airport, a rather grand name for a single building not much bigger than the Lecture Theatre! We passed through the most laid-back customs I have ever seen and emerged to the welcome of our hosts, whom my colleague Kane infamously greeted with the question “So, where’s the party?”



TOM SPINDLER (BACK ROW RIGHT) WITH SOME OF THE KIDS AT JOHN WESLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL, SWAZILAND.

If any of us expected a party we had a pretty rude awakening. In Swaziland we worked hard. The four of us lived and taught at John Wesley Primary School in the township of Msunduzi, on the outskirts of the capital Mbabane. We took classes of 60 six- and seven-year-olds for English, Maths, Science and Religious Education five days a week. And let me dispel a myth right now: not all kids in developing countries sit in their lessons like angels! Without a doubt, many are eager to learn, but when you consider that the children were expected to sit in their chairs for five hours every day, with only a half hour break, any seven-year-old would start to get a bit restless to say the least. If you add to this the fact that there was no organised sport, music, drama or dance within the school, I am sure you can see why teaching sometimes felt like policing a riot! Many times, though, just when I thought if a single child asked me for the fiftieth time for a “Sharpener, Teacher” I would scream the place down, one would come out of nowhere and give you the tightest hug you could wish for. It was impossible to do anything other than love them.

Our duties were by no means limited to our own classes. We also ran extra English classes for the Grade 7 pupils, the last year of Swazi primary education. This was a demanding task as the kids ranged in age from twelve all the way up to some quite threatening-looking nineteen year olds! If I tell you that I’m about to recount my scariest experience in the country, you would be forgiven for expecting tales of huge wild game or run-ins with township gangs. But no. Undoubtedly the time I most feared for my own safety was taking part in a tribal dance, which involved standing next to a topless, particularly aggressive Grade 7 girl, not knowing which way to duck to avoid her wildly swinging breasts on one side and the huge, sharp knife she was wielding on the other. Fortunately for my sake she, along with all the other Grade 7 pupils, passed her public exams.

The school ran a feeding programme which provided nutritious food for the children three days a week. This was vital to the pupils as, for many, often their last meal before coming to school was a starchy portion of potatoes and corn meal the previous evening. So it was worth the many hysterics I caused in the kitchen with my woeful cooking skills. It really does nothing to help the machismo to be worn out after five minutes of stirring the same vat of meal that a small fifty-year-old woman has been pounding away at for the past half hour!

Each weekday afternoon two of us would go down to the government hospital to look after abandoned children, who lived in a ward run by the “Women Who Care” project. During one of my first afternoons I think I grew up more than in the last year. All of the babies are suspected to be HIV positive (testing is impossible without their untraceable parents’ consent) but this one nine-month-old in particular displayed AIDS related symptoms. Already severely malnourished, on this day the thrush in the boy’s throat was so painful that he could not eat. As he lay in my arms, and later as he was put on oxygen in the ICU, with his breathing becoming gradually slower and more difficult, it really didn’t seem like he would be there the next day. Fortunately he did make it and his subsequent dramatic improvement was due largely to the tracing of his mother who began breast feeding him. The presence of his mother also put to rest my most sobering thought from that afternoon that if he had have died that day the person who would have cared about it most would have been me, a random volunteer from 5000 miles away who had only known him a couple of hours.

I didn’t feel as different as I thought I would. With the exception of the mall in the town centre, we were the only white people around, and it certainly was a point of township gossip that there were five new *umhlungus* in town, but I never felt my colour or status as a foreigner put me under threat. Of course we were asked for money, but this is only due to the fact that in Swaziland, as in most other places in Africa, “white” is synonymous with “wealthy”. Unlike other places in Africa though, the Swazi people have never been subject to much persecution by whites, and

as a result they feel no resentment towards them. Probably the biggest threat to any of us was the countless marriage proposals that the girls received! Many times I found myself pretending to be Kate’s brother, Claire’s husband and Emie’s cousin all at the same time, in a desperate attempt to repel the wave of wooing that greeted us at every bar we went into!

Believe me, ladies, you do not want to be involved in a Swazi wedding. It is customary for the groom-to-be to invite his intended to spend the night with him at his village. Unbeknown to his fiancé, he will have informed all the women of his village of this fact. They will respond by emerging from their dwellings at four o’clock in the morning and start screaming at the top of their voices, until the bride emerges naked except for a cow-skin skirt around her waist. She is then taken to the Cattle Kraal, the spiritual centre of the Swazi village and, with its floor covered in fresh dung, the setting for the wedding. You might think all this is punishment enough for the young lady, but she is then beaten until she cries, when she is judged to be showing the fitting level of emotion for her wedding day!

This paints a rather comical picture of Swazi culture, but I assure you it is anything but. In fact, one of the things that most struck me about being in Swaziland was how wonderful it felt to be in a country with a strong national culture. Whilst for many people in Britain, the closest things we have to a true traditional culture are a somewhat commercialised Christmas and Morris dancing, the Umhlanga festival took pride of place on the Swazi national calendar. For me, the day on which Swazis not only celebrate their Independence, but also the king’s birthday, his present being a chance to choose a new wife, was one of the most awe inspiring spectacles I have ever witnessed. Virtually every unattached Swazi girl, amounting to thousands and thousands of young women, danced round the royal parade ground, all decked out in brilliantly coloured costumes. I believe it was the sheer noise of the rattles on their feet and their singing that brought about the storm that sadly drenched the whole thing! To see an entire nation, though, truly captivated and unified by this one cultural event was something that will always stay with me.

All in all I had a truly amazing time during my time in Swaziland, even if I did not always realise it at the time! I would like to thank the OR Association for my Enterprise Award, without which I would have struggled to seize this incredible opportunity. I am indebted to them for their generosity. I would also like to encourage anyone reading this who has the chance to do anything like I did to do it. You will probably work as hard as you have ever worked in your life, but the rewards are just staggering and will stay with you long after you return home. If nothing else, it gives you an opportunity to go for days without showering and grow a big bushy beard!

REUNIONS

'THE REAL FIFTY YEARS ON' REUNION - 3 FEBRUARY 2004



AT THE 'REAL 50 YEARS ON' REUNION
"A MEDLEY OF SCANDALOUS REMINISCENCES AND SERIOUS
REFLECTION FOLLOWED"

'Real' because the co-organisers Denis Moriarty and Peter Stevens both left Reading School in 1954 and so become quinquagenarian ORs later this year. In anticipation of this anniversary a record number of 27 school contemporaries (it should have been 28 but John Roper was unfortunately detained on the business of Their Lordships' House) sat down to lunch in the Princess Marie Louise Room at the Oxford and Cambridge Club in Pall Mall.

This was the third such informal annual reunion to be held. In the unofficial usage of the City and Livery Companies of London where the establishment of tradition is concerned (first occasion - 'a questionable innovation'; second - 'a promising development'; third - 'an immemorial custom'), we have arrived. Now we look forward to next year, when a further opportunity to forgather would appear to be welcomed - we shall do our best to continue this 'instant tradition'.

As before, the Club provided excellent food, wines and service in agreeable surroundings. The company was, as always, congenial, and (like claret) improves with age: we are very fortunate in our contemporaries. Nominations, including self-nominations, of others who might enjoy such an occasion are invited. In discussion (this being the year also of the Professors - see below), the whereabouts of Professor Michael Slater, R C Ward and D J Wilkins were queried - also those of Robin Oldland, eminent hotelier. While new recruits will always be welcomed, it was considered that optimum attendance has very much been reached. Should numbers increase significantly it might become necessary to give priority to members of the OR Association. Further to John Perry's exhortations of last year in that connection, the presence of Chris Widdows was much welcomed, both personally and in his capacity as Honorary Membership Secretary of the Association, to enable others present to express their appreciation of his invaluable services to the Association and, if not already in membership, to join.

Denis Moriarty presided with his characteristic amiability and

effectiveness ('suaviter in modo, fortiter in re'). Grace ('Benedic nos, Domine...') was said by Peter Stevens (whose failure through insufficiency of funding to achieve ordination was one of the Church of England's luckier escapes). After lunch, the Loyal Toast was proposed by Professor Tom Arie, following his felicitous performance of this duty last year. The toast to Reading School was proposed by Professor Mike Shattock, who in a speech both witty and sincere complained about the short notice at which he had been called upon. As it was, his spontaneity was highly effective and, had he had more time to prepare, the weight of his erudition might well have demolished us! All present joined in expressing the warmest good wishes to the School, and 'Floreat Redingensis' was drunk in a Armagnac presented by an Anonymous Benefactor. The School Song was rousingly sung.

Thoughts of School being uppermost in our minds, a medley of scandalous reminiscences and serious reflection followed, more or less in rotation around the table. Concern for the School's future predominated. David Jordan proposed that those present should explore ways of contributing to the School's finances and it was informally agreed that this should be pursued. Appreciation was expressed to Rodney Huggins for his long and dedicated participation in all aspects of the School's complex constitutional structure and to Gareth Price for his practical contribution to the Chapel organ - and his confidence in entrusting the education of his sons to the School.

A particular welcome was extended to those attending for the first time and those who had travelled far - Alastair Barker from Shropshire, Michael Burkham from Anglesey, David Thomas from Swansea and Bill Mackereth from Norway. It was noted that this was a 'County' occasion: of those accepting the invitation, eight had been in County House, six in East Wing, five in West House, four in West Wing, three in South House and two in East (which nevertheless had won the Cock House Cup in 1954 - do such things still exist?). Places on the Seating Plan were marked in each individual's House Colour. Totals: Boarders 13, Day Boys 15.

Greetings and good wishes had been telephoned to the Club by Brian Thompson, on holiday in Australia, and had also been sent by John Gardiner from Spain and Peter Long from his skiing holiday. The full list of apologies for inability to be present appears below: all were remembered as 'Absent Friends'. Those present stood in memory of Raymond Cartwright, recently deceased.

Present: R A Alexander, Professor T H D Arie, A W Barker, R A Bissolotti, P R Blunt, Dr D M Bruton, Lt Col M I Burkham, P R Fiddick, T V Gould, R P Huggins, D J Jordan, Brigadier W A Mackereth, D E H Moriarty, M J Oakley, Major J M Perry, G W O Price, D J Rooney, D A Russell, Professor M L Shattock, A C Simons, C P Smallbone, P C Stevens, D O P Thomas, M J van Brugen, C J Widdows, M Wolfers, C A Yeats.

Apologies: A A Barker, Dr R K Ditchburn, J D Gardiner, B J Gould, Commander R I C Halliday, Dr R F O Kemp, P E Long, D J Rogers, Lord Roper, C A Scroggs, Col B J Thompson, Professor B G J Upton, The Revd D J Weekes.

Floreat Redingensis!

ANNUAL DINNER 2004

The Annual Dinner and AGM this year have been booked for Saturday 27th November in the "Blue Room" at Reading University and once again ladies are invited to join us for dinner.

Due to the great success of last year's dinner we have had to seek larger premises as we anticipate greater numbers for this year's event, thus our return to this location after a number of years.

We have maintained the principle of providing good value for money and the ticket price will be £27.50 per person.

Further information will be circulated with the notices for the AGM later in the year but please book this date into your social diary now.

THE READING SCHOOL BIDDING PRAYER

By John Oakes & Chris Widdows

Prayers, at least until recently, could have a political as well as a spiritual purpose. They could include the equivalent of the political sound bites of today. The Reading School Bidding Prayer, intoned in the presence of sovereigns, mayors and aldermen, mitred bishops and gowned academics, has a clear purpose. Look at us, it says, steeped in history and approved by the highest powers in the land.

For many years now the Bidding Prayer has been printed in the School List. It was first composed by Francis P. Barnard, Head Master of Reading School from January 1886 to August 1894. The great names which he included in the prayer reflected the concerns of his time. A version of the original prayer appears as a cutting, glued by him into a copy of a book about Valpy's time entitled 'Our School' by Oliver Oldfellow MA, the nom de plume of the Reverend Benjamin Bockett OR. The prayer is also printed in the Barnard version in the speech day programme for 1907. This prayer differs in form and content from that printed in the School List today in that it includes the name of Sir Thomas Pope but does not mention Robert Appleton, George William Palmer or Joseph Wells. Barnard was also careful to claim but 400 years of history for our school whereas the 1940 version claims 800. Barnard counted 400 years from the re-foundation whilst later editors have made more ambitious claims. A similar problem occurs in the School Song which in its original version claimed that only 400, not 800, years had passed since Reading School was founded.

The following version of the prayer in which Appleton, Palmer and Wells appear, but Pope does not, was printed in the April 1940 edition of the Reading School Magazine.

Yea shall pray for Christ's holy Catholic Church dispersed throughout the whole world, and herein especially the King's most excellent majesty; for the ministers of God's holy word and Sacraments; for the High Court of Parliament, and Magistrates, especially those of this Borough; and for the whole Commons of this Realm.

Yea shall praise God for the pious and charitable memories of the founders and benefactors of this School,

*Of John Thorne, Abbot of Reading;
Of Henry VII, King of England;
Of Sir Thomas White, Lord Mayor of London, the founder of Scholarships to the College of St. John Baptist in the university of Oxford;
Of William Dene;
Of Elizabeth, Queen of England;
Of William Loud, Archbishop of Canterbury;
Of John Kendrick;
Of Richard Valpy and Robert Appleton, sometime Headmasters;
Of George William Palmer, Privy Councillor, then fonder of a Scholarship to the University of Reading;
Of Joseph Wells, formally Warden of Wadham College, Oxford;*

And all other benefactors, who during more than 800 years laboured, each in their generation, to provide opportunities in the School of this Town for the growing in godliness and sound learning.

Finally let us praise God for all of those who are departed out of this life in the faith of Christ, and pray that we may have the grace to direct our lives after their good example; that life ended, we may be partakers with them of the glorious resurrection and the life everlasting.

Who were the worthies included in the prayer and who modified it to remove the name of Sir Thomas Pope and include those of Appleton, Palmer and Wells?

OF JOHN THORNE, ABBOT OF READING

The great Benedictine Abbey of Reading, founded in 1121, will have maintained a school, mainly for its own purposes, for some considerable time. Reading School, at least the one which has survived the vicissitudes of English history to become one of the best state schools in the country, derives more from the Royal Grammar School of Henry VII at Reading which was opened in 1486 in the building of the Hospitium of St. John hard by St. Lawrence's Church. It was started, some say re-founded, at the time when Henry VII visited Abbot John Thorne during one of his early journeys through his new kingdom.

As Mike Naxton points out in his 'History of Reading School', there were two Abbots of Reading called John Thorne, one who died in 1486 'only to be succeeded by another of the same name'. We cannot, therefore, be sure to which of these two the Bidding Prayer refers as both were involved, as we will see, with the re-foundation of Reading School.

OF HENRY VII, KING OF ENGLAND

Henry VII (1475-1509) needs no introduction to ORs. For some time a sculpture of his head graced Big School. It was unveiled by our present Queen when she visited the school to mark the quincentenary in 1986. As she removed the covering the sculpture shook alarmingly and she stepped back in some trepidation. Happily it was made of a plastic and would not have caused too much damage to Her Majesty had it fallen. It was later removed and it now rests in the Second Master's office. Some argue that it should be restored to Big School but it would be better placed in a new venue if one could be found.

We need only say that Henry VII was the first Tudor King of England and remind ourselves that he beat Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. He united the Houses of Lancaster and York by marrying the daughter of Edward IV but he still had to overcome two attempts to see him off by the 'pretenders', Perkin Warbeck and Lambert Simnel.

One of the tactics he used to consolidate his hold on the throne was to travel widely thought the Kingdom. He was in Reading, it seems, on Saturday 27th May 1486 and it is more than likely that he stayed at the Abbey.

At this time there was a dispute between the Abbot of Reading and the townspeople about the almshouse known as St. John's House or the Hospitium of St. John. This establishment was endowed with the revenue from St. Lawrence's Church and the profits of the mill at Leominster. It had been closed down and the funds diverted to the running expenses of the Abbey.

The Abbot, John Thorne, appears to have chosen the moment when the King was his guest to suggest that the vacant Hospitium of St. John and its revenue would make a free school for the sons of the good burgesses of Reading. It is, perhaps, a sad reflection on the ways of the 21st century that we now deduce that Abbot Thorne neatly avoided an enquiry into the whereabouts of the funds, placated the townsmen, pleased the King and eased his conscience at a stroke.

Henry VII, taken with the idea of a free grammar school (Scola Libera), sanctioned the Abbot's scheme and endowed the new school with ten pounds a year from the crown rents of the town. The first of the Abbots Thorne died and his successor, also called John, continued the good work of his predecessor on our behalf.

OF SIR THOMAS WHITE



SIR THOMAS WHITE

Sir Thomas White, the founder of St. John's College Oxford, was born in Reading in 1492. He was the son of a clothier from Rickmansworth and he was probably educated at Reading School but was largely brought up in London. He was apprenticed to a prominent member of the Merchant Taylor's Company who left him £100 when he died. His father had also left him a little money and with these funds he set himself up in business. He was successful and by 1533 he was a senior warden of the Merchant Taylor's Company. It is interesting to note that he was born early in the reign of Henry VIII, witnessed the short reign of Edward VI, played a key role as Mayor of London during the reign of Mary and spent his last years in the reign of Elizabeth I.

He became rich and made a number of loans and donations, notably to the Cities of Coventry and Bristol. He became a promoter of the Muscovy Company. He was Sheriff of London in Edward VI's first year. He became Lord Mayor of London in 1553 and his pageant, the Lord Mayor's Show, was notable for its splendour. On the 13th November 1553 he sat on the Commission for the trial of Lady Jane Grey.

When Wyatt's rebellion against Mary Tudor's proposed marriage to Philip of Spain broke out, he received Queen Mary in the Guildhall, where she made her famous appeal to the loyalty of the citizens of London. The Wyatt rebellion was particularly dangerous because it was aimed at the centre of power, the City of London, and the Lord Mayor had a crucial role to play in the defence of the monarch. Thomas White led the City troops in repelling the rebels from Southwark Bridge. He preserved the City for the queen and presided over the trial of the rebels.

He was knighted for his great service to, and in the presence of, Queen Mary by the Earl of Arundel in 1553. He managed to make a number of enemies during this turbulent period and an attempt was made on his life whilst he was listening to a sermon in St. Paul's on 10th June 1554. He must have appreciated the moment when on 9th August of that year he received Philip and Mary in state into the City of London.

When his year as Mayor was over he devoted himself to charities. On the 1st May 1555 he was granted a royal licence by King Philip and Queen Mary to found a college dedicated to the honour of God, the Blessed Virgin and St. John the Baptist (the patron saint of the Merchant Taylor's Company). Sir Thomas White died, some say in relative poverty, on 12th February 1567 in Oxford

He endowed Reading School, amongst others, with two scholarships at his new College of St. John. In 1618 the good burgesses of Reading agreed to supplement the White Scholarships by the amount of *'ffower pounds by the year for the maintenance of the Two Schollers from our Schoole of Reddinge'* (Ref. *St. John's College Register II* p623). These scholarships were of great importance to Reading School but when the school withered away in 1866 they fell into abeyance. It was not until 1883, under the Headship of Dr. W. Walker, that one of the original White scholarships was revived. The Reading School Magazine of July 1883, whilst celebrating the award of the scholarship to A.E. Messer, asked the question: "by-the-by, to what limbo have our University Dons spirited away the other Scholarship? We always thought there were two." This interesting comment leads us to propose an article in the next issue of the Old Redingensian about the history of the Sir Thomas White Scholarships and we would appreciate hearing from past holders of the award.

Francis Barnard coupled the name of Sir Thomas White, in his version of the bidding prayer, with that of his great friend Sir Thomas Pope thus: *Of Sir Thomas White, Lord Mayor of London, and Sir Thomas Pope, Privy Councillor, the founders of scholarships attached to the School at the respective colleges of St. John the Baptist and*

the Holy Trinity in the University of Oxford. There is no trace, other than its appearance in the one copy of Francis Barnard's Bidding Prayer, of the Sir Thomas Pope scholarships in the School's archives. Clearly Barnard had information not available to us.

Sir Thomas Pope was born at Deddington, near Banbury c.1507, was educated at Banbury School and Eton and became a civil servant. As such he made a great deal of money out of the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. He was out of office under Edward VI but at the beginning of Mary Tudor's reign he became a member of the Privy Council. He was a devout catholic and founded Trinity College, Oxford in 1555 as a means of ensuring that he and his family would always be remembered in the masses of its members.

He was a great friend of Sir Thomas White, who emulated him by founding St. John's College. It may also have been because of this friendship that Pope established the scholarship at Trinity for a Reading boy. What happened to the Pope scholarship? A most intriguing question which awaits further research.

OF WILLIAM DENE

The name of William Dene was included in the Bidding Prayer by Francis Barnard, who may have had access to more information about him than we have at this time. Mike Naxton made extensive researches in the records when he wrote his 'History of Reading School' and was driven to make the following comment in a footnote:

"The bidding prayer also lists William Dene as an early benefactor of the school. Described as a 'rich man and servant of the Abbey', his epitaph states that he gave 200 marks 'for the advancement of the school' although there is no trace of this endowment. It is, in fact, as mysterious as the identity of William Dene himself, who, apart from his epitaph in the Abbey Church, is not featured anywhere in the annals of the town."

OF ELIZABETH QUEEN OF ENGLAND

Elizabeth I granted a charter to the Borough of Reading on 23rd February 1560. In it she made the Corporation of Reading liable for the payment of the salary to the Master of the Free School. To meet the expense she relinquished a small but proportionate part of the borough's crown rents. She also gave the borough the authority to elect or remove the Master.

Each year the Mayor of Reading attends the Presentation Evening, the modern successor of Speech Day, and presents the Head Master with his stipend of £10. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, during the royal visit to mark the quincentenary of the School's refoundation, graciously presented the stipend for the year 1986 to the Head Master John Bristow.

OF WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

Like Henry VII and Elizabeth I, Archbishop Laud needs little introduction to ORs. His ghost was said to walk the floors of South House on 'Archie Laud Night'. Perhaps it still does. He remains, despite some recent competition, our most famous OR. He was born on 7th October

1573 in his father's house in Broad Street, Reading. His father, William Laud senior, was a master cloth worker and ran a considerable business from his house. Young William went to Reading School, where he was a few years junior to John Kendrick. From Reading he was sent to St. John's College, Oxford as a commoner before he was 16. Whilst there he aligned himself with the High Church against the Calvinist interests in the University. Many of his subsequent difficulties and successes were directly related to this period. His academic career was successful despite a number of illnesses and he was ordained as a



WILLIAM LAUD OR

priest in 1601. He was successively President of St. John's, Warden of All Souls' College and Vice Chancellor of Oxford University and later rose through the church hierarchy as a result of ability and patronage. We have only to recall the plaque in Big School to be reminded that he became Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1626 and Bishop of London in 1628 and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633. Whilst Archbishop he attempted to 'anglicise the Church of Scotland'. This led to the Bishop's War and to the summoning of the 'Long Parliament' to pay for it. It was this parliament, in which the OR Daniel Blagrove sat as MP for Reading, that impeached him for high treason. He was never convicted of this charge but it was on a bill of attainder that he was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1645.

It was the actions he took to support his old school, when he was Archbishop of Canterbury, which found him a place in our Bidding Prayer. On 26th March 1640 he gave the town of Reading a valuable manor and estate at Bray worth £200. He directed that some of the money should go to increasing the stipend of the Master of Reading School. He also directed that some of the income should go to support a scheme he devised to keep the school up to standard, a form of Stuart period OFSTED inspection. This was the 'Triennial Visitation' when the Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, the President of St. John's College Oxford and the Warden of All Souls' would visit Reading for the day to 'inspect' the School. The first visitation appears to have taken place on 7th October 1648 when the visitors appear to have found the

master unworthy of his salary! To have such notable academics visiting the school gave it considerable kudos. Richard Valpy, that wily publicist and thespian manqué, made a great fuss of the Laud visitors in his day, thus turning the affair to his advantage.

The Triennial Visitation, which fell into disuse when the school petered out in 1866, was reinstated on Friday 18th October 1878 when Dr. Walker was Head Master. In the years thereafter, the great academics found that they were too busy on the appointed day, a lapse which was lamented for a while by the editors of the School Magazine. As ever at Reading School the new 'traditions' of Speech Day evolved until they seemed to be hallowed by time, as will, one suspects, those of Presentation Day.

OF JOHN KENDRICK(E)



JOHN KENDRICK OR

John was the eldest son of Thomas Kendrick, a prosperous clothier, and his wife Agnes, a lady from a well known Reading family. He was born in 1573 in the family house opposite the Rose Inn in Minster Street, Reading. The house and gardens was the site of the family cloth business. Thomas, a prominent business man, was granted a coat of arms, now the badge of Kendrick School. He was Mayor of Reading in 1580.

John was educated at Reading School when it occupied the room below the Town Hall in which his father, Thomas, must have conducted business as Mayor. He went up to St John's College, Oxford at the age of sixteen and returned to Reading in 1592 to take over the family business. However, he went to London and, even though he had an Oxford degree and a successful family business at home, he served a seven year apprenticeship with a master draper in order to qualify as a freeman of the Drapers' Company of London and he was admitted to the full privilege of the Guild in 1614.

He was an excellent businessman and amassed a great fortune. He was a great philanthropist and preferred to finance charities which created employment. He died at the age of 51 on 30th December 1642 and left £12,500 in

trust with the Mayor of Reading for getting the poor into work. Part of the bequest was used to build and fund a house for the poor in Minster Street called the 'Oracle'.

Sadly John's huge fortune was badly mismanaged by his own family and most of what was left of his money was claimed by Christ's Hospital. The 'Oracle' was demolished but the name lives again in the huge new shopping centre built on the same site recently.

The burgesses of Reading managed to hang onto a portion of John Kendrick's bequest, known as the 'Kendrick Loan Charity'. This became significant when in March 1867 the Charity Commissioners approved the apportioning of these funds to the building of a new Free Grammar School in Reading.

A new building at Reading School erected in 2000 was named after John Kendrick. The present Reading Foundation, as we have seen, sold the old Kendrick Boys' School property along the Queen's Road a few years ago and the money gained from its sale is now invested and administered by the Foundation in support of the School.

OF RICHARD VALPY & ROBERT APPELTON SOMETIME HEAD MASTERS

Richard Valpy, of course, remains the greatest of our Head Masters, despite his well recorded propensity for flogging. He was content, it would seem, as Head Master of Reading, as we have written evidence that he turned down the Headship of Rugby School.

He was elected Master of the Royal Grammar School of Henry VII at Reading, as he so frequently and grandiloquently put it, on 18th September 1781. It is said that he continued to 'wield the birch' for fifty years and his fame was widespread and his school sought after. This is the more remarkable because it was an age when the great schools were in turmoil. There were rebellions at Winchester and Harrow and also at Eton where Valpy's great friend Dr. Keate, the Head Master, was pelted with rotten eggs by his scholars. In the Reading Mercury dated 13th July 1839 the school was described thus: "In the golden age under Vaply, families were attracted to Reading by the reputation of the school. Men of social and public standing were proud to have been his pupils."

When Richard Valpy retired in 1830 he handed his school over to his son, Francis Valpy. Francis struggled to keep the school going, despite a ruling made by Lord Eldon in 1805 which restricted the charges that could be made for lessons in 'Free Schools' and thus reduced his income. The old familiar battle about the presence of boarders at Reading School boiled up and numbers diminished. Francis gave up the struggle and retired. The Corporation of Reading appointed Robert Appleton, the chaplain of Reading Prison, as Head Master. He struggled manfully, so it is said, to keep the school going but the spirit of educational reform had begun to revive, reorganise and criticize and it was the more richly endowed schools which survived the test. It is said that Reading School had to 'borrow a boy to take up the Sir Thomas White Scholarship', so badly had attendance

fallen off. Appleton wrote a report which he presented at the Triennial Visitation in 1860. The report was so damning that the school was closed and the Corporation began to make plans for a new school to be built. No doubt this is the reason that the good Appleton appears in our Bidding Prayer. The plans led to the Reading School Act which passed Parliament in 1867 and eventually to the building of our present school.

OF GEORGE WILLIAM PALMER



GEORGE WILLIAM PALMER MP

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Alderman George William Palmer was MP for Reading in 1882, during the Headship of the Rev. Dr. W. Walker, and clearly maintained his interest in the School for many years. In December 1912, during Dr. Eppstein's Headship, he established a scholarship at University College, Reading of the annual value of £60 to be tenable by a boy from Reading School. The first winner was Eric Baseden who was killed in action on Thursday 26th October 1916 in the Great War at the age of 22 (Ref. Old School Ties. Oakes and Parsons. DSM Peterborough 2001. P229).

It is likely that the Bidding Prayer was modified by Dr. Eppstein to include Palmer's name and that of Joseph Wells. We must remember that the new school had a very shaky start and it would have been useful to include a powerful local politician in the prayer.

OF JOSEPH WELLS

Joseph Wells was born in Reading in 1856 and was educated at Reading School. He had been a day boy for most of his school career but came into School House for his last year and became Captain of School. He went up to Queens College, Oxford with an Open Classical Scholarship in 1875. His First Classes in Classical Moderations (1877), in Litterae Humaniores (1879) and in Modern History (1890) exceeded the academic record achieved by any OR in the history of Reading School until one B.E. Butler (1920-25) added a Craven and a Gainsford to three First Classes. Is there an OR who has exceeded that record?

Joseph Wells was elected to a Fellowship at Wadham in 1882 and became junior bursar

and lecturer. He had been appointed Warden of Wadham College, Oxford in 1913 and he came to School in that capacity when George Keeton was formally chaired as Head Master in Big School on the occasion of the 'Triennial Visitation' in 1914. He justified Dr. Stokoe's faith in him when he became Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford, a post which he held until 1923. He resigned the Wardship in 1926 and died at the age of 73 in 1929.

Joseph Wells was President the Old Redingians Club in 1914 and 1915 and also played an important part in the negotiations and the management of the School as Chairman of the Governors during the amalgamation of Reading School and Kendrick Boys' School (See the October 2003 issue of the Old Redingensian). He is commemorated in Reading School on a tablet in the entrance to the Wells Library, the small building which was, for a number of years, the Prefects' Common Room.

The inclusion of George Palmer and Joseph Wells in the Bidding Prayer supports the hypothesis that the prayer was rewritten by Dr. Eppstein. It would have been entirely in



DR. JOSEPH WELLS OR

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character, as far as we can determine such things at this remove, for that enthusiastic supporter of the Empire and the public school system to have seen the value in so doing. Who removed the name of Thomas Pope, or indeed why he was mentioned in the first place, remains a mystery.

How old is the school? Mike Naxton has grappled with this problem and he concludes that in 1921 the School Song and, perhaps, the Bidding Prayer, were changed when someone discovered that education was being dispensed in the town in 1120, the year before the Abbey's foundation. On this evidence, such as it was, someone decided to claim an extra 400 years of history for us!

If the Bidding Prayer is still alive, it should, after all, evolve.

OBITUARIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

R.A.J. MIDDLETON OR PP (34-39)



By E. Steel (31-39)

Ron died peacefully on February 20th, after a four month battle with cancer. He joined Reading School in 1934. His academic record was brilliant, terminating in ten credits in School Certificate, thus being exempt Matriculation. He also excelled at Rugby and cricket. In 1939, at the age of 16, he left school and worked for Great Western Railways whilst waiting to join the Army. In 1942 he was commissioned into the Berkshire Yeomanry, Royal Artillery, serving in U.K. and later in South East Asia. He was awarded the MBE for distinguished service in Java and later joined the Chin Hills Anti-tank Regiment in Burma.

In 1947, on leaving the Army, he joined the Bank of England and this was the start of a distinguished career. The computer was about to revolutionise trade and industry and he was there at the start. He ran the Systems Analysis of the Bank's first experiment with computers and was second in

command of the Pilot System. In 1976 he took charge of the Bank's computer systems, leading their expanded use in all directions. Simultaneously he played a leading role amongst the computer experts of the G10 Central Banks and was the Bank's representative on the Inter Bank Research Committee. He retired in 1984 but never rested, becoming a consultant on security and banking at home and abroad. After more than fifty years in the computer field, he always remained up to date and at the cutting edge. A colleague described his attributes as perception, patience and political diplomacy - in one word, leadership.

Throughout his career he remained a keen sportsman. He played Rugby for the ORs and for the Bank of England Rugby XV, which he captained for two seasons, was President of the United Banks RFU and still found time for cricket and golf. He was also an active member of the Cuckfield branch of the British Legion and was a respected leader in the Old Redingians Association, of which he was elected President in 1990. I will always remember, through the years, his warm, broad smile and friendly handshake

Ron's Memorial Service was held on March 1st at Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield before a full congregation. Our President, J.V. Oakes, was represented by J.W.M. Smith PP. Also attending were ORs Canning, Steel, Waring, Widdows and Wiggins.

Our deep sympathy goes to Ron's widow Juliet and her family.

THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN RICHARDS (41-47)

Bishop John died on 9th November 2003 at the age of 70. He was educated both at Reading School and Wyggeston Grammar School, Leicester and then attended Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge followed by National Service in the Royal Artillery in Egypt.



Towards the end of his career as Bishop of Ebbsfleet - a non territorial See of the Church of England - he was appointed as one of the first two 'Flying Bishops' in the wake of the General Synod's decision to ordain women. In this role he was given the responsibility for 100 parishes from Cornwall to Lincoln.

He was guest preacher at the Reading School Commemoration Service held at St. Mary's Butts, Reading in 1998 and was an immediate success with the boys.

CHARLES F. SAGE (23-31)

Charles Sage, one of the outstanding Old Boys of his generation, died in November 2003 at 90 years of age. He made his mark at School between 1923 and 1931 and was prominent both academically and on the sports field. He was greatly encouraged by Messrs. Francis and Timms and left VI Modern after matriculating.

Amongst his many interests a few have been selected from his valet:- OTC Sergeant, Cert 'A' 1929, House Prefect, Dramatic Society 1927-1930, Shooting Colours 1930, School and House Rowing Colours 1929 and 1930, School Athletic Colours 1930, Captain 1st XV 1931. At the Annual Swimming Sports he was virtually unbeatable at the 'Plunge'.

He and his wife Kathleen were prominent in public life, both having been Mayor of Reading, Kathleen in 1976 and Charles in 1979. In 1981 he was elected President of the Old Redingians Association. He was initiated in the Reading Old Boys' Lodge in 1948 and it was to the Masonic movement that he devoted much of his time. He was installed as Master of the Reading Old Boys' Lodge in 1962 and became a member of the Berkshire Masters' Lodge in 1963. His final promotion was Past Provincial Junior Grand Warden 1997.

A memorial service was held at Shinfield on 2nd February 2004.

**DENNIS ARTHUR BLAKE
(32-37)**

Dennis was born on 23 March 1921 and left school in 1937 to spend two years working for Reading Council. As soon as WWII started he joined the RAF and served therein until 1946. Between 1943 and 1945 he served as Station Navigation Officer in Gibraltar and rose to the rank of Squadron Leader.

He joined the Civil Aviation Authority in 1947 and made an outstanding contribution when leading the CAA technical team at international conferences. He worked on the All Weather Landing System which is still used today and retired in 1981 as Director of All Weather Operations.

He married in 1951 but his wife Betty died in 1975, leaving a daughter and two sons. He subsequently remarried in 1976

and had 27 years of happy married life with Penelope. He enjoyed retirement to the full, with many hobbies and interests to fill his time. He died in September 2003 aged 82. All who knew him loved and respected him.

**JOHN RAYMOND
CARTWRIGHT (43-54)**

Raymond Cartwright died on 26th October 2003 at the age of 68 after a long illness. A boarder in South House he was a keen oarsman at School. He joined the Royal Berkshire Regiment as a National Serviceman with an immediate commission. Following demobilisation he accepted a place at Cambridge University, after which he joined C&A Ltd. for whom he worked for 32 years and took early retirement at the age of 53. He was the brother of Terry Cartwright (55-62).

He leaves a son Nicholas and a widow Margot to whom we extend our sympathy.



P.O. SCUDDS (38-44)

A memorial service was held in September 2003 for Peter who died at the age of 75 leaving a widow, Linda, and two sons. John Illman CMC, OR President 2003, represented the Old Redingensians at the service.

F.C. (FRED) SMITH (28-33)

Fred, of Shinfield Green, Reading passed away in 2003. He was a stalwart supporter of the Association and regularly attended the AGM and Dinner.

ALAN SEARS (45-51)

News has just reached us of Alan's death. He was Captain of Berkshire County Cricket between 1945 and 1951.

P.J. McHUGH (59-66)

P.J. McHugh, a retired bank manager from Winnersh, Wokingham, died in January this year. He was a keen member of the Old Redingensians Golf Society and had played regularly with them.



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