

MAY 2005



THE OLD REDINGENSIAN

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

At the time I was invited to become Vice-President by John Oakes, I realised what a considerable task I was taking on, especially as I was also to continue as honorary secretary.

I really had a class act to follow as John's understudy. The position required the same level of commitment that John has always been prepared to offer the OR Association during the last decade. I therefore set about learning as much as possible about the workings of both the Association and also the interface with the school, particularly the staff and more senior pupils. From being a relatively new boy on the Council, I now address you as president – something which I had not anticipated.

There were, however, two overriding pressures for me to accept the proposal to become president in 2005. The first, and most important, was to replace a close friend of mine, Tom Bucknell, who sadly passed away before taking up office. The second was a personal one. My grandfather and his brother came to Reading School in the early 1900s. My father, Eric Maule, was also educated at the school in the 30s, together with his brother and my godfather, Henry Maule. My own son, Matthew, was educated at Reading School in the 80s, so the Maules have a long record of attendance! I was, therefore, keen to take on this responsibility and, in doing so, give something back to the school whose heritage my family has always cherished.

I accepted the presidency at a very significant time of change for the OR Association but, having worked closely with past presidents, John Illman and John Oakes, we jointly developed an initiative, which I believe addresses all the major issues.

CHANGE

The way we interact and relate with fellow ORs is now changing. This has been brought about in part by our domestic and work locations. Well over half of ORs live outside the Berkshire area. No longer can one expect to meet an old school friend in the Boar's Head public house or play Rugby on a Saturday afternoon at the Sonning ground.

Reading School nowadays does not have a simple catchment area focused around Reading. Pupils travel further distances to school and after university only a minority is ever likely to return to the Reading area to live. Therefore our approach to communications needs to be enhanced.

Distance from the Reading area makes it exceptionally difficult to stay in touch, particularly for recruiting members for the OR Council which is a current pressure. Arranging events such as OR Rugby tournaments, cricket weeks and golfing events has become more challenging. Social events such as the annual dinner are more difficult to organise and commit to, especially when overnight accommodation is required. Without these activities we have little



KERR KIRKWOOD WITH MICHAEL MAULE (PRESIDENT, OLD REDINGENSANS ASSOCIATION)

occasion to meet and, in my view, these are all worthwhile building blocks for our bridge to active OR membership.

Nowadays, greater career, family and social pressures limit the time available to give to our Association, so every volunteer we have is highly prized and valued. These issues are being reflected right now within national associations such as the Lions, Roundtable, Rotary and, of course, other old boys' clubs.

Younger people, in particular, have many good reasons why they do not want to join us and we must explore what they would like from the OR Association. What would influence them to join? We must work on how we can meet their needs.

However, not just the younger members require our consideration. ORs in mid-career have young families and they are fighting their way up their career ladders, possibly commuting long distances and, at weekends, just want to recover. The spirit might be willing but the flesh may well be weak!

COMMUNICATIONS

The Old Redingensian journal is a cornerstone for communications and soon we will update our OR website by introducing more hyperlinks and modern graphics, to appeal to all age profiles but particularly the under 40s. We need to mirror the success of Friends Reunited and enhance the way we, the ORs, communicate within the context of our Association.

We have, in fact, created a new Council function, focusing on all styles of communication, both external and internal. During the last eighteen months I have worked closely with the Council to establish a Mission Statement and clarification of the OR Association aims which have been detailed in a separate article within this edition.

Communications with the school are extremely good, made easier by the friendly welcome to ORs by the senior teaching staff and head. I have been given the opportunity of talking to the assembly for Years 12 and 13 (the Lower and Upper Sixths to those of us with grey hair!) about the ORs. I have

also been invited into the teachers' common room and introduced to everyone by the headmaster.

CULTURE

Please let me reassure the more traditional members that our OR culture will be engraved on me just as 'Blackpool' is found written through every stick of Blackpool rock. The ethos and heritage of our Association will be protected but, at the same time, we must move on and develop. New generations of Reading School boys will respond in very different ways to our current style. Just as teaching methods change and sporting techniques and training strategies alter, we have to change how we do things. Ultimately, our character, our culture and heritage will remain as important to future Redingensians as it is to us today.

The byword is evolution not revolution.

CHALLENGE

The new Council accepts this challenge and will work hard to anticipate and fulfil the younger generation's needs. Already we have developed an initiative that was launched by John Illman and followed by John Oakes, called Operation Shepherd. The objective of Operation Shepherd is to identify individuals in different year groups throughout all the OR age profiles from 19 to 90 and influence them to motivate their contacts and network. The idea is to generate new social events with the objective of renewing and revitalising lapsed friendships.

CAMPAIGNS & ACTIVITIES

Our emphasis will be on a range of social events – 20-year reunions, 40-year get-togethers and regional events. For example, we will take the quality West Sussex reunion style to other areas, both in the UK and overseas. We also plan to invite new graduates back to school for a reunion and ensure we promote OR membership. We propose expanding the newly introduced September Rugby 7s tournament and build on cricket, golf and soccer activities and hopefully we will mirror these sporting activities with cultural events.

Without increasing the numbers of active younger members, the OR Association will wither on the vine. At the same time, if we disenfranchise our older members we will have no heritage and a reduced income.

I have tried to encapsulate what we, the 2005 Council, will be doing over the next year. We have been forced to accept the loss of experienced and effective Council members, which places greater pressure on those stalwarts who remain, but life goes on. Whilst we have recruited a small number of quality replacements we definitely would welcome three additional active volunteers who will focus with me on these five "C's".

Change - Communications - Culture - Challenge - Campaigns and Activities

Thank you,

Floreat Redingensis

Michael Maule



OLD REDINGENSIA ASSOCIATION

OUR MISSION

To maintain and develop an active and diverse old boys' association capable of fully supporting the pupils and staff of Reading School.

OUR AIMS

- Through a clear reflection of the Social and Sporting needs of all age groups to encourage ORs to become more involved with social meetings, events and activities.
- Whilst helping to maintain the School's heritage, ensure a modern approach to all activities and communications, ensuring younger age group participation.
- Encourage adventurousness, creativity and leadership in pupils, mainly through

the support for overseas sporting tours and the Enterprise Awards initiative.

- Fully support the Headmaster and Staff and actively develop working links with Governors, Reading Foundation, Parents & Friends of Reading School.
- Ensure that all our transactions demonstrate financial and legal probity.

THE HEADMASTER'S LETTER

I have been advised by John Oakes that this issue of the Old Redingensian is going to contain a report on school soccer. He then said: "Can you write something? Just the usual kind of thing will do!" Well, thanks a lot John. Should I comment on my personal skills at football (very low indeed by the way); the teams I support (both embarrassing and irrelevant); how dreadful Reading Football Club's goal scoring record is this term? You may wish to hear how soccer has resurrected, phoenix like, from the ashes to be a major sport at Reading School again but I assume there will be more of this elsewhere. I could have checked with my son about something relevant to say, as he is a fiendishly keen football fan. In my experience, however, trying to say things on the advice of the member of another generation is a recipe for disaster and potential public excoriation. So I am going to say that I hope this edition of the magazine is interesting (I am sure it will be in John's ever safe hands) and that I am going to only partially rise to his command and will write, for the first time ever, something that is not connected with the main focus of "The Old Redingensian".

I need, therefore, to impart some news to excuse this departure from the usual form. I thought that ORs might be interested in some items of school news which cover both our academic and broader aims. There are many of your members who want to know about physical education and games. You will be pleased to know that the School has been awarded Sportsmark Gold status for another

4 years. This is a highly prestigious award that we already possess and it is a sign of the School's strength in physical education and games that this has been extended in this way. A member of the school physical education and games department has been appointed as a School Sports Co-ordinator (Dan Swan), working with the Local Education Authority to develop sports programmes with local primary schools (e.g. Alfred Sutton, St. John's and New Town Primary Schools) and special schools (Reading Alternative School). It is this outreach and community work which is important to the School and the maintenance of its justifiably high reputation.

With regard to the academic profile of the School, members will be interested to know that 27 students from the School have obtained offers of places for next year from colleges of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. This is the highest number ever and a remarkably high proportion of the 130 members of Year 13. I am sure this is a record unrivalled by any other state school.

The School has in March submitted a bid to be a Specialist School for Humanities. This is now being considered by the Department for Education and Skills and if the bid is successful the new status will start in September 2005. It will bring about £500,000 extra funding into the School. We have chosen to develop three subjects: Geography, English and Classics. This is a combination chosen thus far by no other secondary school in England, so if the bid were to be successful, we shall be able to notch up another Reading School first.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is a major challenge for any school. It is not an area of historic strength for Reading School, but one in which there has been tremendous advances recently. The School is one of 35 nationally that has been made a Microsoft Partner School. This has brought in £35,000 of extra ICT funding and is a boost to further exciting developments.

I need to point out that much of the work on the last two items has been completed by Mrs. Margaret McDonald, who is one of the School's Assistant Head Teachers and a tireless worker in the interests of continuing school improvement.

Finally, I need to tell ORs, if they have not already heard through the incredible network which exists between members, that I shall be leaving Reading School after eight years on 31st August 2005. I shall be taking up the Headship of Desborough School in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. I do not know if this is my last article, but nonetheless would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who have been so much support to me over the past 8 years and ask that you continue to support the school and those who serve in it in a similarly generous spirited manner next Academic Year.

Floreat Redingensis

Andrew Linnell

READING SCHOOL PE & SPORT FOOTBALL SEASON REPORT 2005

By the Head of PE

2005 saw a wider participation in Association Football at Reading School than there has been since 1901/2 with the introduction of teams at U16 and U15 level, with moves to make it the major Lent term game in 2006. This is largely due to a lack of quality hockey facilities and a shift in the expertise within the department. So far Mr. Carrick has not been lynched. That, however, may change after reading this paragraph!

It has been a mixed season. The 1st and 2nd XI were not entered into the Berkshire League this year but still had a good fixture list against both local comprehensives and independent schools. At senior level the first XI at times played some of the highest quality football seen at this level, but unfortunately did not possess a goal-scorer to finish off excellent

approach play. This resulted in several losses by the odd goal, and a set of results that was unreflective of the team's ability. The 2nd XI enjoyed more victories, but again goals were hard to come by. Goals however have arrived at the end of the season with good victories over Claire's Court (1st XI 7-2, 2nd XI 4-2). There is encouraging news for next season with much of the 1st XI squad made up of Year 12 boys, with some excellent players to come through from Year 11.

At Key-Stage 4 the U16 had another mixed season, winning some games comfortably (Radley 8-0, Gordons 5-2), but losing games by the odd goal. They teamed up to play with Year 10 against Reading Alternative School in a new venture organised through Mr. Swann and the Reading School Sports Co-ordinator programme. The U15/16 team

produced an impressive display of free flow attacking football, resulting in an 8-0 victory. Confidence was high within the squad prior to this victory, with equally impressive displays earlier in the season. Outstanding results included a 7-0 victory away to Radley, and a 6-1 home victory against Sir William Borlase. It will be important for the U15 to build on the solid foundations they have made this season, in order to improve on the high standards of performance they have set themselves. This was particularly pleasing for Mr. Coggan, who prior to his illness had put in a great deal of work with this team but did not get to see the fruits of his work.

Overall a season that shows promise for the development of Football at Reading School.

Darren Carrick

READING SCHOOL & ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

For a number of years in the late 19th Century Association Football was the major winter sport at Reading School. The following photographs show that the team contained 13 players in the 1893/4 season and that, in company with many other schools, the number was reduced to 11 by the 1899/1900 season. The Head Master, the Rev.d. Charles Eppstein, often played in the school side, as did two other staff. This accounts for the unusual age range noted in the team pictures. It was decided to revert to the Rugby code in the 1901/2 season because of the difficulty of securing matches with other schools, the larger number of boys that could engage in Rugby and the difficulty that boys had on leaving school to get any Association football.



READING SCHOOL
FOOTBALL CLUB
1893-94



READING SCHOOL FOOTBALL CLUB
1894-95



READING SCHOOL FOOTBALL CLUB
1899-1900

THE FOURTH “FIFTY YEARS ON” REUNION LUNCHEON

WEDNESDAY, 26 JANUARY 2005 AT THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE CLUB

At Morning Chapel at School in the middle of the last century, Charles Kemp, the Headmaster, often read a prayer which included the words “... grant that, as we have entered into the labours of other men, we may so labour that others in their turn may enter into ours.” All of us who met and lunched together on Wednesday, 26 January 2005 agreed with John Roper when he said how extremely fortunate we had been in those who had taught us, and in what we had been taught. The people had been more important than the curriculum, and included both the masters and our schoolfellows – some congenial and beneficial, some rebarbative but equally educational. It was gratifying and heart-warming that after fifty years we could meet our contemporaries with appreciation and affection. Of those into whose labours we had entered and who happily still survive, Frank Terry, Leslie Moor and Michael Hinton were recalled with special appreciation. The latter, now The Rev’d. Dr. Michael Hinton, a retired headmaster (Dover Grammar School for Boys, 1960-68, ed) and priest, was the author of “A History of the Town of Reading” (London, Harrap, 1954), dedicated to “the Staff and Boys of Reading School”: the Preface makes reference to “Messrs. E. L. Moor, J. F. Hodgess-Roper (now the Lord Roper) and P. C. Stevens.”

Where our own labours are concerned, all of us can claim, in our various ways, to have striven for the public good. (A list of those present and their principal areas of professional activity, and a record of those unable to be present – many of whom were seeking adventure (or relaxation) in sunnier climes – is given below).

As on previous occasions, we met (a total of 25) in the Princess Marie Louise Room at the Oxford and Cambridge Club, Pall Mall, London, informally and by invitation of Denis Moriarty and myself as members of the Club. After a few introductions and reintroductions involving the greater extremes of seniority and juniority (OED sanctions this!) we were all able to recognize without difficulty whom we had been when at school. John Betjeman writes “When someone different was ‘I’”, but most of us appeared remarkably unchanged, and to reveal the lineaments and characteristics of fifty years ago – or was it but yesterday? Of those whose careers had developed significantly differently from what might have been expected, almost all had followed a better path: to personalize is invidious, but David Weekes, who should have become at least a Lieutenant-General, is a priest; Denis Moriarty, who might have had his name in lights on Shaftsbury Avenue or Broadway, became a BBC producer of cultural programmes of the highest quality; Mike Oakley, whose paintings should hang in Tate Modern became head of an art school;



LORD ROPER (JOHN HODGESS-ROPER)

while Dermot Rooney reinvented himself as a highly successful civil engineer. And that’s just a few of the members of West House!

It was a particular pleasure to welcome our two “Americans” – Robin Oldland from a distinguished career in hotel management and Robin Fabel, an eminent Professor of History, and all those attending for the first time. A fortunate chance in the seating plan reunited Mike van Brugen and David Wise, both sometime of the Royal Inniskillin Fusiliers, while Gareth Price and Chris Widdows had both served in the Honourable Artillery Company.

The Club Champagne soon eased any momentary shortage of words, and conversational volume rose steadily. The presidential gavel was handed to Denis



MIKE OAKLEY

Moriarty as of right, who called upon David Weekes to say Grace – “Benedic nos, Domine ...”, rendered perfectly despite years of absence in faraway places such as Uganda and Scotland. After this, we were soon tucking into a meal described by some as “dietetically correct” – but enjoyable for all that. As always, we were impeccably served by the Club staff, in immaculate surroundings.

After lunch the Loyal Toast was proposed by The Lord Roper as the most highly honoured by Her Majesty of those present, and was drunk in Club Port, followed by the singing of



GARETH (BUFFY) PRICE

the National Anthem. Professor Robin Fabel from the once-rebellious colonies proposed the toast of “Reading School – Floreat Redingensis!” This was drunk in a fine 50 year old Armagnac, presented as before by An Anonymous Benefactor – speculatively (and wrongly!) identified by some as Archbishop Laud – and was followed by the hearty singing of the School Song. Deprived of the words by our Scrivener’s increasingly arthritic hand, some of us will have to brush up on the second verse! We are “nation” men: nothing “weaker” about us!

Thereafter in accordance with our custom we were invited by Denis to remember “Absent Friends”, and the list of apologies and “no responses” was read. We were then invited to speak (if we so wished) briefly about our experiences, thoughts, and recollections. There was great support for the School, with some regret for modern manners and dress, and great concern for its future survival. Interest was expressed in the whereabouts of certain distinguished ORs, especially from the Royal Navy, and suggestions were made for improvements to the organization of future luncheons. These occasions are intended to support – and in no way compete with – the OR Association.

To conclude the proceedings John Gardiner led those who had stayed the course in a rousing rendition of "For he is an Englishman" (G&S, HMS Pinafore, Reading School Operatic Society, 1954) – somewhat to the surprise of Club members arriving for dinner.

Denis and I hope very much to be able to continue in future years to hold similar reunion luncheons for our personal friends among our contemporaries at School who we think will find them enjoyable (as we most certainly do), with whom we wish to share our pride and pleasure in our Club, and who we hope will be willing to bear a proportion of the costs in order to enter into the spirit of "Fifty Years On".

Present:

The Church: The Rev'd. David Weekes
Politics: The Lord Roper **Government & Legal:** C. J. Hoile, A. C. Simons, M. J. van Brugen **The Military:** Commander R. I. C. Halliday RN, Brigadier W. A. Mackereth, Major J. M. Perry **The Learned Professions:** Dr. D. M. Bruton (Medicine), G. W. O. Price (Actuary), D. J. Rooney (Civil Engineering), D. L. Thomas (Solicitor) **Business:** M. J.

Childs (Insurance), R. G. Oldland (Hotel Management), C. J. Widdows (Business Analyst), C. J. Yeats (Public Relations) **The Arts:** J. D. Gardiner (The National Trust), D. E. H. Moriarty (Television), D. Wise (Music), M. Wolfers (Journalism) **Education and Administration:** R. A. Alexander, Professor R. F. A. Fabel, M. J. Oakley, P. C. Stevens, Professor Wilkins.

Apologies:

Professor T. H. D. Arie, A. A. Barker, A. W. Barker, R. A. Bissolotti, P. R. Blunt, A. C. Bohman, Dr. R. K. Ditchburn, P. R. Fiddick, B. J. Gould, T. V. Gould, Dr. E. N. Hey, R. P. Huggins, D. J. Jordan, Dr. R. F. O. Kemp, P. E. Long, D. J. Rogers, D. A. Russell, C. A. Scroggs, Professor M. L. Shattock, C. P. Smallbone, Lt. Col. B. J. Thompson, Professor B. J. Upton.

Sadly, contact seems to have been lost with: M. E. Digby, J. T. P. McGuirk, D. O. P. Thomas.

Floreat Redingensis!

Peter Stevens

Old School Tie
Silk £15

O. R. Tie
Polyester £10
Silk £15

From Membership Secretary:

C. J. Widdows
21 Bulmershe Road
Reading RG1 5RH

Cheques payable to:
Old Redingensians Association

THE ENGINEERS - PART II

BY TED WEBBER

THIS IS THE SECOND PART OF AN ARTICLE IN OUR SERIES "LIVES OF DISTINCTION",
 THE FIRST PART HAVING APPEARED IN THE OCTOBER 2004 ISSUE

ROSS BRAWN
HON. M. I. MECH. E.
(1966-1971)

Ross always showed an interest in engineering and how things were built as he grew up in Manchester. He was particularly interested in motorsport and the construction of high performance cars

Ross says he came under the influence of Tony Davies at school. They did not really hit it off and Tony advised him to leave after his O levels. It was the one piece of advice from Mr Davies of which he actually took notice. He then completed an engineering apprenticeship at the AERE Harwell and joined Williams Grand Prix Engineering in 1976 as part of their research and development team.

His talents were soon spotted by the team, who assigned him to work on the team's new wind tunnel. This project was a great success for Williams. Ross was with the Williams team for 8 years and in that time he gained valuable experience in all aspects of the design and construction of a Grand Prix car. Ross left Williams to take the role of Chief Aerodynamicist at the Force team. Three years later and Brawn was on the move again to Arrows.

Brawn's second creation helped the Arrows team to take fourth place in the Constructor's Championship in 1988. His talents once again caught the eye of those watching, and Tom Walkingshaw commissioned Brawn to aid in the set-up of the new TWR Design Centre. He oversaw the design of his sports cars, including the Jaguar XJR-14, which won the 1991 World Sportscar Championship.

In 1991 Brawn was lured to Benetton to become the team's Technical Director. Ross oversaw the development of the Benetton challengers which won the Formula One Championship in 1994 and 1995. During his time with Benetton, Ross worked alongside designer Rory Byrne and it was this partnership that moved to Ferrari at Maranello alongside Michael Schumacher in late 1996.

As Technical Director, Ross Brawn has been a major influence on the resurgence of the Ferrari team. Brawn is the brains behind the driving of Schumacher, and their partnership has brought Ferrari several successes. In 2002 Ross missed his first race for the team when back problems forced him to stay home, but with modern technology Ross was practically in the garage although he was in England!



Away from the hectic world of Formula One Ross likes nothing better than to go fishing, a hobby he loves almost as much as he does F1. He is also a keen gardener and in Ross's garden everything is definitely rosy! He is married to Jean with 2 daughters, Helen and Amy.

He says he has been fortunate to have been in the right place at the right time and to have taken the opportunities presented, but it is not a conventional career path or way of life. He received an Honorary Degree in Engineering from Ancona University in 2003 and became an Honorary Member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers the same year.

JOHN BRIAN GREGORY
BSC., C. ENG., F.I.E.E.
(1948 - 1951)

When Jack came to the sixth form at Reading School he had already decided that his career would be in some form of electrical engineering. His father had been an early radio enthusiast and the interest in electronics was passed on. Jack made a hobby of building radio sets as well as a TV receiver from converted radar equipment.

After three years in the sixth form he went to Birmingham University and in his last year assisted with research work on early transistors. Technical training during the long holidays included work at EMI at Hayes and on the Metro in Paris. After graduating, he served his two years National Service in the Royal Signals at Catterick as an instructor at a Radio Technician training regiment. Jack's CCF training and time in the school shooting team came in very useful and he joined the University Rifle Club and was in the Regimental team at Bisley.

Looking for a job after National Service, Jack decided that British Railways offered good opportunities in Signal Engineering, where a massive modernisation programme was just starting. He joined the Western Region design office at Reading and worked on the conversion of the many mechanical signal boxes into considerably fewer boxes working electrical signals through electronic remote control systems. In those days (the 60s & 70s) the safety interlocking was achieved with complicated relay circuitry and the Western Region was unique in carrying out all the design, installation, and testing within house. This allowed plenty of "hands on" experience, which he thoroughly enjoyed.

In later years, signalling systems became more and more computer controlled. Jack moved to Paddington and assisted with the introduction of the Integrated Electronic Control Centre, where the railway layout appears on a computer screen and a keyboard and roller ball are used to signal the trains. The interlocking is held in computer software.

Jack looks back on his time on the railway with pleasure. Great changes over the years led to a varied and challenging career. Jack

is now thoroughly retired and still lives near Reading. He delights in maintaining and repairing any sort of mechanical or electrical device (from old cars to TV sets) and says he has plenty round the house to keep him busy for years.

JOHN CLIFT SAVAGE
C.ENG., M.I.MECH.E.,
B.TECH.
(1959-1966)

John is the son of Martin Clift Savage, a former housemaster of South House and Second Master well remembered for his nautical description of some boys' work. John joined British Railways (Western Region) and went to Brunel University, Uxbridge, graduating in 1970 with 1st Class Hons. in Mechanical Engineering.



His training took him first to Swindon Works, of GWR fame. There he learned railway engineering practice and about the overhaul of diesel hydraulic locomotives, diesel multiple units (DMU's), and their many components. He also trained in Crewe Works, the Derby Locomotive Drawing Office and the Research Department of BR.

His first appointment was as a diesel locomotive engineer at Plymouth Laira Depot. Then for six years he managed Marsh Junction Depot in Bristol where he was responsible for maintaining coaching stock, "on track" machines such as tampers and ballast cleaners, depot cranes, carriage washers, station lifts, lighting and electricity supplies.

In 1981 he moved to Paddington HQ, later becoming the Western Region DMU Engineer and then the Network South East DMU Engineer based at Kings Cross, where he started three days before the disastrous Underground Station fire. Shortly before privatisation, he moved to Reading, to train operating company (TOC) "Thames Trains," becoming their Chief Engineer.

Over the years John was involved in the introduction of several new classes of DMU

train which he says was exceptionally interesting but also extremely hard work. Every DMU train has frequently to be modified and updated during its life span to maintain safety and reliability, and control its maintenance costs.

His most significant project was the consequence of an accident in which a Thames Trains (TT) DMU suffered a horrendous "leaf fall" slide, crashing onto the platform over the buffer stops at Slough at 30 mph. TT had to do something to prevent this ever happening again so they initiated a project with partners in the rail industry to design and fit a modern automatic sanding system to all TT trains. This won an award for technical innovation. John says that today automatic sanders are an essential item of safety equipment on every modern DMU and Electric Multiple Unit train on the national rail system.

Another interesting aspect of his work has been attending many derailments. The occasion when loaded bulk cement powder wagons derailed inside Parsons Tunnel at Dawlish was particularly memorable, as was a 117 ton Class 47 diesel locomotive "down the bank" at Uffington.

John says he has been fortunate to have ridden many miles in the driving cabs of trains, and indeed inside diesel locomotive engine rooms "on the move", carrying out examinations and fault finding. Engine rooms are wonderfully warm (if a little noisy!) on a cold day.

His last appointment was with TOC "Wales and West" at Cardiff Canton Depot as their Class 158 Engineer and he retired in September 2000. A contemporary scholar notes that John met his wife, Judy, on one of Leslie ("Cod") Hardy's famous Swedish exchange trips.

In retirement John enjoys travelling at home and abroad (by rail whenever possible!), and follows with a keen interest the ups and downs of the privatised railway. For leisure, he drives minibuses as a volunteer for Yate, Sodbury and District Community Transport.

JON JACKSON
I.ENG., C.C.E., I.C.E.C.A.
(1980-1985)

Jon says that his time at our school was not a particularly startling 5 years. He was average at most things academically, and the only highlight of his sporting career was representing his house at swimming on a single occasion. He enjoyed Physics (Mr. Jackson), Chemistry (Mr. Judd) and French (Mr. Evans, Dr. Preston) mainly, although he does not recall actually disliking any subject in particular. But perhaps that's just the benefit of the passage of time.

He was in the CCF (army), as originally he thought that he might join the RAMC (Medical Corps) on leaving school, but opted instead for Engineering.

He studied first at Reading Technical College, on an Electrical Engineering course. Then in 1986, he joined the large Reading firm Foster Wheeler and went on to study Process Plant Engineering. He worked for FW in Reading until 1995, with brief sojourns in Scotland (BP Grangemouth Refinery), Hull (Lindsey Oil Refinery), Grimsby, Manchester and Walsall.

In 1995 he was assigned to a position in Singapore for 18 months, from there to Thailand (30 months) and then in 1999, to South Africa, where he is currently working for Fluor.

He is an Incorporated Engineer *, registered with the Engineering Council, and was recently elected President of the Cost Engineering Association of South Africa (CEASA). He is a Certified Cost Engineer with the Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering (from the US).

He is also a member of the South African Standards Generating Group for Project Support Services, responsible for writing the National Qualifications for the SA Government.

Engineering has given Jon the opportunity to see the world (Europe, Asia, Africa and the US), and meet some great people. He says it offers an exciting and challenging career, and a chance to really "make a difference"! He is grateful for the opportunities that have been made available to him as a result of his "good, solid" education at Reading School.

He is married to a lovely lady from the Philippines, and they have 3 children. They also care for a local South African girl, who lives with the family, and sponsor another through school.

* Incorporated Engineers have an important role in the engineering hierarchy. The qualification allows their skills to be recognised even though they may not have a degree - Ted W.

ANTHONY JOHN WRIGHT (1934-1941)

Tony was at RS from 1934 in Junior School with Charlie Poole as form master. C.P.Peach (Head) was his torment, with frequent flogging for such things as jumping over the wire. He went to Senior School in 1936 until early 1941, where he achieved Cert "A" in the CCF and Junior Matric. Other than being in a couple of school plays and enjoying rugby, he says he was mischievous and had no great distinction.

Tony joined the Post Office Engineers in 1941 and left for Canada in early 1951, mostly because he was short of funds and disillusioned by the prospect of no salary increase in the foreseeable future. He had a position lined up with "Ma Bell" in Hamilton, Ontario, which faded while on the boat over



the Atlantic. He shunned job hunting but he was quickly employed as an electrician in Stelco's giant steel mills, where he made First Class in 13 months. The work was filthy but the money very clean and good.

He enjoyed his experience with Stelco immensely, but he longed to get back to telephony so he quit in 1956 and moved to Brockville, Ontario with Automatic Electric (a subsidiary of GTE Corp. USA). He stayed there for the next 32 years, going from Engineer to Engineering Supervisor of 29 staff. In 1977 he became a Systems Engineer in digital switching. He says he is probably one of the few people who can say they have worked on everything from magneto to advanced optical digital switching systems.

During this period Tony travelled frequently to the parent manufacturer in Northlake (Chicago) Illinois. At the same time he instructed factory staff and travelled overseas for GTE as Systems Engineer. He went to Japan, Philippines, Hong Kong and several islands in the Caribbean several times, including Trinidad where he lived for 9 months. He was also a company representative in engineering to every major Telephone Company in Canada. He says he had a "whale of a good life", and never regretted emigration.

Tony married in 1956 and had two children but his wife died in 1977. He married again in 1986, retired in 1988 after working for 47 years, and moved to Prince Edward County on Lake Ontario in 1989.

They designed and had their own home built and run a tourist cottage at the bottom of the garden on West Lake for a hobby. Tony is a Past Master of his Masonic Lodge where he is still active.

PETER BROADBENT B.SC., F.MECH.E., F.I.E.AUST. (1960-1967)

Peter started in 1A * with Mr Timms. He remembers Charles Kemp was the headmaster, although Mr Kemp retired the year he left. Peter founded the Reading School Sailing Club, and he obtained permission from Mr Kemp to work in a fenced-off area in a corner

of the Quad on Friday afternoons (instead of CCF) and after school to build a 14ft sailing dinghy. They sailed it on the gravel pits at Burghfield, and won the local school championship in the first year.

Armed with his 3 A-levels, Peter started a 1-3-1 sandwich course with Perkins Engines Ltd, and spent a year at their plant in Peterborough before he went up to University at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

After graduating he held a number of interesting and varied jobs, including a three year spell in Zambia with Anglo-American and three years with his own one-man business developing and producing small bore tunnelling locomotives and equipment, before emigrating to Australia in 1982.

Having spent four years designing direct-fire targetry systems for military training in Albury-Wodonga, Peter moved across the country to Western Australia to take up a position with a company developing paints capable of application underwater. Perhaps this was for torpedo target practice!

In 1993 with two friends, also engineers, Peter founded HBH Consultants in Perth, Western Australia (WA) <http://www.hbh.com.au/>, engaged primarily in engineering projects for the resources and mining sector. As with all enterprises, there have been good years and bad, but HBH has grown steadily and currently employs almost 70 engineers and draftsmen. Much of their work has been for the mineral sands industry, which is the side of the business Peter has concentrated on developing. HBH has now established considerable expertise and reputation in that industry, both in Australia and overseas. In 2000 HBH was awarded the Institution of Engineers Australia WA Division's Engineering Excellence Award for a diverse and complex project completed for one of the major mineral sands producers in WA. In 1996 Peter became a Fellow of both IEAust and IMech E.

Peter has retained his love of boats and the water, and he currently sails his 32ft cruiser/racer "around the buoys" on the Swan River in Perth and out to sea. By way of a little light relief, Peter and a friend recently bought the chandlery/brokerage/repair business at the South of Perth Yacht Club. He has this in mind as a longer term retirement plan.

* I assume that forms have been renamed since my time, when 1A was for 8 year-olds in the Junior School, which closed in 1945. Mr Timms was my form master there in 1942 - Ted W.

FG.OFF. JAMES ALEXANDER DUNBAR B.ENG., A.R.A.E.S. (1989-1996)

Whilst still at School, headed by Masters Bristow and subsequently Mason, James developed a twin interest in both aviation

and military service. This was inspired in no small part by experiences in both the RAF section of the school Combined Cadet Force, under Wing Commander Clive Cousins, and in the school physics and technology laboratories.

Following departure from Reading School, James undertook an aeronautical engineering degree at Southampton University, from which he graduated in 2000. Prior to this, he had spent nearly 16 months in the employ of British Aerospace (or BAe Systems as they have subsequently become). However, this time merely reinforced his desire for a service career, and he applied to the RAF in 2002. He took particular pleasure in the disappointed look on his boarding officer's face (himself a pilot) when James informed that gentlemen that, despite fulfilling the requirements, he was a committed engineer



and had no interest in becoming the pink part of an aircraft structure known as the seat/stick interface to engineers!

James gained his commission in April 2003 and, following a period of further training, he now commands a flight of 85 technicians at RAF Marham, responsible for servicing Tornado components. Although at the very start of his career, he looks forward to some challenging times ahead, particularly as the RAF undergoes some of the most widespread and cultural changes in its recent history. Already, at this early stage, he has taken great satisfaction from his chosen career path and the variety it offers.

James maintains his connection with Reading with an address in Caversham and he plays Rugby for his RAF station.

117TH AGM & ANNUAL DINNER SATURDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2005

AT
THE READING
COLLEGE & SCHOOL OF
ART AND DESIGN

ANNUAL DINNER 2005

YEAR ON YEAR SAVING OF £2.50

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- Ticket price £25 (2004 Price £27.50)
- Emphasis on a social gathering
- Easy parking and access
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Further details of the Annual Dinner and AGM will be circulated later in the year

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THE SOCIAL CALENDAR IN PICTURES

IMAGES BY CHRIS WIDDOWS

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2004

During the service, the Kendrick Boys' School War Memorial was rededicated by the Ven. Peter Coombs and Lt. Col. Jouques O.B.E. laid the wreath. Michael Smith OR, P.P. read "Recessional" by Rudyard Kipling to bring the service, which was attended by over 60 ORs, to a close.



OUTSIDE CHAPEL. L TO R: M. MAULE, SUB. LT. OLIVER HANKS R.N.,
LT. COL. NEALE JOUQUES O.B.E., R.L.C., THE VEN. PETER COOMBS, JOHN OAKES,
WNG. CDR. DAVID POWELL R.A.F.



L TO R: PETER MIDDLETON (65-72),
MRS JULIET MIDDLETON, PHILIP MIDDLETON

THE MIDDLETON ROOM OPENING CEREMONY 19TH JANUARY 2005

Mrs. Juliet Middleton unveiled a plaque in memory of her husband, Ron, during a ceremony attended by the Council of the Reading School Parents' Association and members of the OR Council to mark the opening of the Middleton Room. The equipment placed in the room was bought from money raised by the Parents' Association and the ORs.



THE ANNUAL DINNER

The Head Master, Mr. Andrew Linnell, addresses the ORs at the Annual Dinner in the Blue Room at Reading University on Saturday 27th November. This year more time was devoted to increased socialising and catching up with old friends and less on formal speeches! Over 70 guests were present and a good time was had by all.



SCENES FROM THE WEST SUSSEX REUNION AT THE BOAT HOUSE AT AMBERLY 30TH APRIL 2005



▲ MICHAEL MAULE PROPOSES
THE HEALTH OF THE
OLD REDINGENSIA'S ASSOCIATION

MIKE SMITH ►

◀ PAST PRESIDENTS' WIVES -
LIZ ILLMAN AND JUNE OAKES



THE SECOND ANNUAL OR QUESTION TIME

13TH DECEMBER 2004 IN BIG SCHOOL



◀ AN AUDIENCE OF 6TH FORM BOYS CONFRONT THE PANEL WITH SOME SEARCHING QUESTIONS



THE OR PANEL PREPARES TO REPLY ▶
L TO R: FRANCIS POCOCK, JOHN ILLMAN, JOHN OAKES
AND MICHAEL MAULE

THE FIRST OF THE NEW SERIES OF ANNUAL OR v SCHOOL ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL MATCHES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S SHIELD



MICHAEL MAULE PRESENTS THE PRESIDENT'S SHIELD
TO HARRY HOARE, THE OR CAPTAIN, WHOSE GALLANT TEAM
WON CONVINCINGLY



OR TEAM



READING SCHOOL TEAM

PRESIDENTS CUP ACTION REPLAY



OR ENTERPRISE AWARDS

READING SCHOOL WORLD CHALLENGE EXPEDITION TO THE INDIAN HIMALAYAS

BY ANDREW TAPPING.

In the summer of 2004 sixteen pupils from Reading School embarked on the journey of a lifetime to India.

The first few days were full of travelling, starting with a free coach ride to Heathrow kindly provided by Horseman coaches. Two flights later and we were facing the heat and hustle of Delhi. This was followed by an eighteen hour bus ride to Manali. The journey was horrendous. Broken fans, tiny windows and the mass of people all aided to the impression of being roasted inside a greenhouse.

The fresh mountain air was warmly welcomed as we unfolded ourselves from our torturous transport. However the gathering of beggars which unfortunately became a common occurrence, was not welcomed. A day's break of travel allowed time for rest, showers and food.

A short Jeep ride took us to our campsite near Chukki, which was our home for the following week. Each morning we walked for about an hour and a half uphill where we helped with renovations at the local school.



This involved painting and a lot of it! We had lots of fun talking (or trying to talk) to the local kids and the adults cooked us lunch on our last day. Both we and the locals were very pleased with the results of our efforts.

Back in Manali we prepared for our 17 day trek ahead of us. We met with our cook for our journey who proceeded to buy food in quantities worthy of a warehouse. About 60kg each of potatoes, rice and flour, 230 eggs and approximately 20 crates of various tins, fruit and vegetables. More bus journeys were booked, meals were eaten and we slept in a bed, a luxury not available for the next 17 nights.

The trek was my favourite part of the expedition by far. On the bus trip (yet another) to Darcha, our first port of call, we



caught our first glimpse of the Himalayas. Towering snow peaked mountains, rising above the clouds, greeted us as cameras were hastily seized out of bags. It was a magnificent sight.

The route we were taking comprised of three passes, the highest of which was 5435m in altitude, a visit to a monastery built into the mountain side and many days of fantastic scenery and amazing wildlife. Mammuts, a cross between a mercat and a rodent, were commonly seen. Yaks, when seen, were great in number. Lammergeiers (vultures) were less frequent but, at a near 3 metre wingspan, were breathtaking.

The trekking itself was varied. From calm, undulating fields to steep, rocky mountainsides, it was all incredible. It took a couple of days to find a pace we were all happy with, but this was interrupted by river crossings. Some were easy, trickling streams compared to near waist deep, fast flowing rivers, requiring rope and poles. In the latter some people lost shoes!

Lunch was always light, generally chapatti and cheese. Dinner was eagerly anticipated as our cook was awesome. He managed to cook chips and pizza and even baked a cake one night! These comforts lifted everyone's mood after a hard day's walking.

In the week following the trek we decided on an alternative route rather than the "greenhouse" bus back to Delhi. Firstly a bus ride to Shimla, a very British hill town, then we rode on the Himalayan Queen, a train which passes through 103 tunnels. Kalka was our change point, at which we continued to Delhi. We splashed out on some air conditioned rooms before taking a train to Agra and the home of the Taj Mahal. Luckily the weather held out for us, and the sun shone on the magnificent marble of one of the most beautiful buildings I have ever seen.

We all reflected on our amazing trip on the last night in Delhi before our flight. It was superb, words cannot describe what I have seen and been through. Everyone who went was brilliant. Thank you very much to the Old Redingians Association for their support.



OBITUARIES

EDWARD ('EDDIE') COHEN (43-46)



*A personal recollection by
Peter Townsend (44-48)*

Eddie was a very popular colleague who will be particularly remembered as The Mikado in the Gilbert and Sullivan opera of that name which was produced by Birdie Nightingale in 1946. Eddie brought off a *tour de force* in that role and I have never witnessed the part better sung, or acted, since. His rendering of "my object all sublime" and his demonic laugh ring in my ears to this day.

Although not in the same form, we both took art as our optional subject in preference to Spanish, German or Latin. Mr. Cox in the art room next to the quad taught us very well; fortunately the art-room was away from the other classrooms as we had a joyful, riotous but fruitful time there. I was particularly impressed by Eddie's choice of colours, favouring blends of purples, pinks and blues. To teach that part of the curriculum, History of Art, Church Architecture, Mr Cox had many photographs of features illustrating the various Gothic orders. We were often lined up with the photographs laid out on a table with several lines of desks intervening and were sent off to retrieve a photo showing the feature required. This produced a merry Grand National type scramble with great rivalry between Eddie and me. But the subject was remembered and the whole class gained credits or distinctions for Art in the School Certificate examination.

Eddie later went to Florence for many years to study classical

Italian Art before joining the family Fine Art business with a Gallery in London's Duke Street.

He was a fine friend who will be sadly missed by all who knew him and our hearts go out to his family in their grief.

Eddie died on 19 January 2005 aged 75.

LT. COL. GERALD ARTHUR GROOMBRIDGE (39-46)

At school Gerry was a distinguished games player and became captain of Hockey XI.



He enlisted straight from school in the Royal Berkshire Regiment and attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst from 1948 to 1951. He was commissioned into the Royal Army Service Corps and served in Belgium, Germany, Egypt, Jordan, Cyprus and Singapore. He played rugby, cricket, hockey and golf, often representing his unit in these sports.

He resigned his regular commission in 1980 and served for 10 years as the Army Careers Officer at Reading and Bournemouth and 5 years as RO2 (Intelligence) at HQ SE District.

He retired in 1995 and maintained a keen interest in golf. He leaves his widow, Jean, and two sons.

Gerry died on 4 December 2003 aged 73.

PETER JAMES BURGESS (39-45)

*Contributed by Kerr Kirkwood
and Vic Payne*



Peter was a good all-rounder at school, participating in rugby, cricket (1st XI colours), athletics and chess. He was outstanding in the National Savings Team organised by Gwyn Francis and with his family and friends he contributed more to the Nationals Savings war effort than any other boy in the Reading School team.

As a national serviceman Peter continued to play rugby; he also played badminton to a high standard and joined a tennis club where he met his future wife. He also took up golf which he played for the rest of his life.

He qualified as a chartered accountant, using his skills to great effect as the Honorary Treasurer of the Old Redingians Association from 1963 to 1984. He espoused many charitable causes, being particularly remembered for his support of the installation of St. Peter's School swimming pool.

He leaves his widow, Betty, two daughters and two grandsons, to whom we extend our sympathy.

Peter died on 2 January 2005 aged 77

REV. JOHN HASELDEN DOBSON (38-48) BA., BD., MA (OXON)

From school John won a Postmaster Scholarship to read

classics at Merton College, Oxford, where he was awarded an MA. He then trained for the Ministry at Oakhill Theological College, gaining the highest marks in the country for his BD.

In 1959 he went to work in Uganda with The African Inland Mission, returning to the UK in 1972. His best selling book, "Learn New Testament Greek", was published in 1988 (now in its 3rd edition) and in 1999 he published "Learn Biblical Hebrew" (now in its 2nd edition). He travelled widely, both nationally and internationally, teaching these biblical languages in short intensive courses with his infectious enthusiasm and much to his pupils' enjoyment.



His first wife, Jo, predeceased him as did his only brother, Rev. Christopher Robert Dobson (38-46). He leaves his second wife, Heather, a son and daughter from his first marriage and his twin sister Elizabeth.

John was a gregarious man and a great communicator. He retired as Rector of Saxlingham, Nethergate and Shotesham in 1994 and died peacefully in Norwich on the 13th January 2005 aged 75.

CHARLES NORMAN HURST (17-26)

Norman was a keen member of the OTC and an accomplished athlete, winning running colours in 1925 and 1926; he won the senior mile in a time of 4 minutes 43 seconds. At the outbreak of World War II he joined the Royal Engineers; he was captured at Dunkirk

in May 1940 and remained a prisoner of war in Germany for the rest of the war.



Norman was proud to be one of the oldest members of the Old Redingensians Association. A memorial service held for him at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Bracknell on 4 November 2004 was attended by Chris Widdows and Kerr Kirkwood who gave an address highlighting Norman's achievements at school and in civilian life. Norman leaves a son and two daughters.

Norman died on 23 October 2004 aged 96.

ROBERT HUGH LEVIEN (26-35)

From a contribution by his brother, John Levien (28-34)

Hugh was as a boarder in West Wing when his uncle, Rev. E. G. Levien, was the School Chaplain. He took an active part in most school and house activities and was a leading member of the shooting VIII which did notably well at Bisley.

He went to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst from where he was commissioned into the XX Regiment (The Lancashire Fusiliers). He was posted to Afghanistan and in 1939 to Peking where he resigned his commission and returned home. On the outbreak of war he re-enlisted in the Royal West Kents and went with the British Expeditionary Force to France as an NCO. He was captured but managed to escape and make his way back to England. He joined

the Parachute Regiment, regained his commission and subsequently saw action in Africa, Sicily and Italy. As a company commander he was dropped into Arnhem where he was captured once again and spent the final months of the war in a prisoner-of-war camp.

After a successful business life he retired to Wells-next-the-Sea in Norfolk.



His wife, Biddy, predeceased him and he leaves 3 sons.

Hugh died on 18 October 2004 aged 87.

DAVID JOHN RICHARDS (38-42)

David joined the Air Training Corps in early 1941 and was quickly promoted to Flight Sergeant. The officer commanding, Flying Officer J G Fry MA, encouraged him to join the RAF as an air cadet based at Oxford. He was chosen for Air Crew Training in Kansas and became Flying Officer Richards.



He trained as a Horsa glider pilot in preparation for his part in Operation Varsity in March 1945; this was the biggest and most successful airborne operation ever mounted with a purpose to land 14,000 men of the British 6th and American 17th Airborne divisions on the bank of the River Rhine. David's glider carried the HQ Company of the Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry Regiment, a jeep and a 6 pounder gun.

He left the RAF in 1947 and joined the Paints Division of ICI Slough where he remained until he retired in 1982. He was a keen member of the Berkshire Archaeological Society, for which he was the Honorary Secretary for 10 years.

His wife predeceased him; he leaves three sons, Tony (63-70), Peter and Jonathan. Tony's son, Matthew, broke the 1500 metres record which had stood for 40 years and for which he was awarded the Farmery Medal.

David died on 16 September 2004 aged 80.

ESSLEMONT ('ESSY') STEEL (31-39)

A personal recollection by Sidney Vines (30-39)

I met Esslemont when I joined the Junior School at Reading School in January 1930, at the age of 8. He approached me calling out "New Bug, New Bug" and attempting to knock my cap off. I responded by trying to trip him up. These preliminaries over, a friendship began which was to last until his death almost 75 years later. The basis for this, as with all such relationships, was the many things we had in common. Pre-eminent was his sense of humour, which never failed.

In his teens Essy showed a talent for thespian activities. With a boy called Farmer, he performed at the regular Sing Songs, held in the winter in Big School. They imitated a well known act of the time, called the Western Brothers. Wearing monocles and tails, they sang a song called "Play up, you cads, play up and play the game." They were very good and they

brought the house down.

The war separated us, at times by continents, but the friendship stayed, as it did when after the war he met and married Lillian Strang, the prettiest of the WRENS who were stationed near his home at Burghfield Place. The marriage produced three children - Alison, Andrew, and Matthew - and brought much happiness to them both, until Lillian died 51 years later.



He had a gift for friendship, as was apparent when St Mary's Church, Whitechurch on Thames was full to overflowing for his Memorial Service. His passing leaves a gap in all our lives, which eventually time will heal, but it will be long before the pain goes.

Essy died on 26 November 2004 aged 83.

Kerr Kirkwood adds:

My cousin was an outstanding NCO in the OTC. He joined the Royal Berkshire Regiment at the outbreak of WWII prior to sailing to India to serve with the Gurkhas until 1946.

GERALD DALLAS WILD (16-23)

Gerry attended Kendrick Boys' School and was one of the 208 boys who transferred to Reading School in the acrimonious amalgamation of 1916. When he left school in 1923 he joined British Rail where he worked as an accountant until his retirement in 1967.

He was a keen sportsman, playing fly-half for the Old Boys' rugby team and was a more than capable bowler for the cricket team which he helped to get started. After moving to Emmer Green in 1952 he joined the Reading Golf Club where, after his retirement, he became its treasurer and later its captain.



Gerry died on 19 December 2004 aged 98.

LESLIE ALAN SEARS (36-44)

Contribution by Kerr Kirkwood and Peter Coombs

Alan was widely known and much respected for his outstanding and long service to the Berkshire County Cricket Club; he was in his twenty second year as chairman when he died.

At school he played in the 1st XI for each of the consecutive years 1941 to 1944. In the match on 10 June 1944 against the Oratory School his bowling figures were 7-3-12-10, after which the July school magazine described L. A. Sears as "a very good captain



Alan leaves his widow, Mary, and two sons and two daughters. He died on 19 March 2004 aged 76.

The Obituaries Editor, Kerr Kirkwood, welcomes contributions from ORs who might know of the sad loss of a school fellow. He also welcomes contributions to "Lives Remembered" from ORs who can add personal reminiscences to those already published in the Obituaries section. His address 33 Aldbourne Avenue, Earley, Reading, RG6 7DB and his e-mail address is: kerrandpat@firenet.uk.net

At the Remembrance Sunday Service in the Reading School Chapel 3 years ago Gerry remarked to Will Lunn, "Do you know, I haven't been in the chapel for 80 years. What a joy to be back here!"

Gerry leaves two daughters, Jennifer and Elizabeth.

whose enthusiastic example has been an inspiration to the teams. His own bowling has been excellent as the results show."

He played for Berkshire CCC between 1945 and 1951. In 1947 he took 53 wickets for an average of 21.06 to finish second in that season's bowling averages.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2005

The service will be conducted by the Venerable Peter Coombs, the OR Chaplain, assisted by the Rev. David Hemsley OR

SUNDAY 13TH 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

"WE WILL NEVER FORGET THEM"



GIVE THIS MAN A BREAK!

He has played O.R. cricket for over 40 years and needs to be substituted. Save him further aches and pains – join us in this year's Cricket Week at the School from July 25-29

- Four one-day games
- Competitive but friendly cricket
- Remind yourself of the quality wicket and other facilities
- Excellent catering
- Renew contact with old friends in sociable apres-cricket surroundings

To play or register interest if you wish to come to watch, contact:

Terry Cartwright - 01428 602992 / terryc@whiteoaks.co.uk

or

Andy Northway - 0018 962 1541 / andy.northway@heritagebathrooms.com

(Teams will be selected at the end of June)

THE READING SCHOOL OLD BOYS' CLUB

1895-1995

BY JOHN OAKES

This article arose out of research for a chapter on the history of the ORs from the 18th century to the present day for the book "Reading School - The First 800 Years or More" to be published early in the next academic year. The author would welcome corrections, additions and personal recollections. In addition he would welcome recollections about past presidents for inclusion in the chapter on famous old boys. His address is 17 Portway, Riseley, Reading RG7 1SQ and his e-mail address is oakes538@aol.com.

The earliest record so far available to us of the Old Boys of Reading School is of a meeting held on 18th October 1771. Amongst the resolutions passed at the AGM of that date was one in which the 'Gentlemen Educated at Reading School' resolved to open an appeal to purchase a house for the Head Master. The 'Gentlemen' appear to have met annually, either in London or Reading, for a number of years. There is no evidence of meetings after the old school closed in 1866 but there are hints that 'Past v Present' games of football were played, followed by dinners, during William Walker's tenure as Head Master between 1877 and 1887.

A notice appeared in the June 1886 issue of the Reading School magazine which stated: "If a sufficient number of names are sent to R.J. Birchall, Buscot, Lechlade, Gloucester, before 24th July, or on that day to him at the School, there will be an Old Boys' dinner in the town." We do not know if the dinner took place but it is clear that there was a movement underway to form an Old Boys' Club. We do, however, have a record of a dinner which was held in the Queen's Hotel in Friar Street, Reading, on 29th November 1888, during which the Old Boys present may have reached some agreement on the steps they should take to establish a secretariat and committee. It is this that was accepted by the historian of the ORs, Len Cheyney, as the foundation date of the Club but he was working from incomplete evidence.

The re-founding of the Old Boys' Club and the remarkable influence therein of two men should properly be dated from 30th June 1895. This is supported by a report entitled "The Old Boys' Dinner" in the Reading School Magazine dated July of that year, which opened with the words: "After an interval of four years, the Old Boys' Annual Dinner was again instituted this year, thanks mainly to the efforts of the Head Master, Mr. Wells, and Mr. Andrews, the last two gentlemen discharging the duties of Secretary. The dinner was held at the Queen's Hotel, Reading, on Saturday, June 30th, the day of the Old Boys' Cricket Match." This is a paragraph rich in history, not just of the Old Boys' Club but of the school.

Mr. Wells was Joseph "Joey" Wells, then a



fellow of Wadham College, Oxford, who was to become Vice Chancellor of Oxford University and a long serving Governor of Reading School. The Head Master was the Rev. W.C. Eppstein, a brilliant leader, though sadly lacking in business acumen. He had taken over from Francis Barnard, who had left that year after an embarrassing 'misunderstanding'. School numbers were low and Eppstein was mounting a campaign to increase the school roll. He made sure that articles in the Reading School Magazine publicised the careers of successful old boys, especially those in the army, Indian police, colonial service and academia. Forming and supporting a vigorous Old Boys' Club was one of the crucial moves in his public relations campaign.

Not far from Eppstein's mind in 1895 would have been fund raising, one of the main reasons why an Old Boys' Club was, and remains, popular with Head Masters. A pavilion had just been completed on the school field and there was not enough money to pay the architect. This was, as usual, remedied by an appeal to Old Boys but Eppstein introduced a new twist by leaning on the architect to accept a smaller sum in payment than he had originally asked for.

The 1895 meeting of Old Redingensians resulted in the formal appointment, for the first time, of an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer, the setting of an annual subscription at two shillings and sixpence (the sum covered the cost of the Reading School magazine forwarded to members), the appointment of a Captain of the Old Boys' Cricket Eleven and of the Old Boys' Football Team. From this date onwards, and for some time to come, the membership list, the minutes and the balance sheet of the club were printed in the school magazine, which also devoted a great deal of space to letters from ORs in India, Africa and Canada. Joseph Wells was appointed Chairman of the Club in 1897 and was asked to preside at the

next annual dinner. He eventually became the longest serving President of the Old Boys' Club, having been officially voted into office at the AGM in 1899. He was to be elected President each year until his death in 1928.

It was not long before the Old Boys were yet again involved in fundraising for the school. The School Corps, having been founded in 1900, lacked an armoury and the funds to build one. The Head Master, ever the optimist in matters of money, persuaded an architect to design and construct one at the cost of £350. Work commenced immediately and a subscription fund was opened. Dr. Eppstein managed to persuade Mr. G.W. Palmer to part with £25 and the Mayor of Reading £10. The Old Boys' Club was able to make some contributions but a small outstanding debt proved obstinate and hung around until 1905. The Corps Adjutant, clearly embarrassed by the problem, settled the debt with a financial manoeuvre based on the renewal of uniforms.

The Old Boys' Club was greatly moved by the loss of lives in the Boer War. At the AGM of December 1902 Mr. D. Haslam Jnr. proposed that the Old Boys should erect a memorial in Chapel for old boys who had died in the South African War. The appeal was successful and a Boer War Memorial and two stained glass windows were eventually placed on the south wall in chapel.

At the AGM of February 1904 it was proposed that "the Committee make a selection of certain colours to form the new colours of the club." A circular was sent to all subscribing ORs with suggestions from which they were asked to state their preference, amongst which were purple, narrow pale blue, chocolate and purple, mauve and white. It is a blessing that good taste prevailed and the colours chosen at the AGM of July 1904 (sic) were dark blue, narrow white and pale blue. Members could obtain ties, sashes, blazers etc. from E. Stransom & Sons, Market Place, Reading. In 1906 an effort was being made to improve the membership list by showing the time at which members were at school, though the job was made difficult because the records for the periods when Dr. Walker and Dr. Stokoe were Head Masters were either not kept or not handed down. It was not until the 1930s that the lists were complete in this regard.

By 1911, a year of great progress, the Old Boys' Athletics Club had been formed under the presidency of the Head Master, with Joseph Wells as Vice President. On Tuesday 24th October 1911 the Reading Old Boys' Lodge No. 3545 was consecrated at a banquet held in Big School under the Worshipful Master W. Bro. Capt. B. St. J. Warren Hastings and a badge was designed for the lodge. This badge was modified for the Old Boys' Club by the removal of Masonic signs. It combines the arms of Reading Abbey, the badge of

Reading School and a shield portraying Henry VII, surrounded by the motto "Ars Mercede Viget". When it first appeared in the School Magazine it bore the further inscription "Refounded in 1895". This device is now depicted in the form of an enamelled medallion on the collar of the President of the Old Redingensians Association. The Old Boys' Lodge had the thoroughgoing support of the Head Master and some of the senior staff and its membership overlapped with that of the Old Boys' Club. A great number of old boys were prominent in the town, both in business and the professions, and Eppstein needed to be sure of their support. The Old Boys' Lodge is still in existence and its members continue to support the School.

The "Great War of Amalgamation" now overflowed into the business of the Old Boys' Club. For some time there had been a proposal to amalgamate Reading School with the Kendrick Boys' School. The scheme, which has been discussed in detail in a previous issue of the Old Redingensian, created an acrimonious controversy in the town of Reading and was passionately opposed by Dr. Eppstein and the members of the Old Boys' Club. At the AGM of 18th February 1914 a proposal "to consider what effect the proposed amalgamation of the Reading and Kendrick Schools would have on the Old Boys' Club" appeared on the agenda and a subcommittee was elected to review the matter.

Many old boys were so angry about the scheme that they wanted to "hold themselves aloof" from the club, drastic action for gentlemen to take in those days. Events moved quickly, Dr. Eppstein resigned his headship in protest and Mr. George Keeton was appointed Head Master in his place. More to the point for the ORs, Dr. Wells, who was originally opposed to the amalgamation, accepted the inevitable and threw his weight behind the scheme. In so doing he swung most of the ORs over to his side. In any case the Great War had started and the special meeting which was proposed for 6th October 1914 to discuss the amalgamation was cancelled, not least because the Honorary Treasurer and the Honorary Secretary were serving in the forces.

By 1916 the OR Club was in war time suspension and the Editor of the School Magazine undertook to print the membership list and to keep the administration ticking over. Captain Crook, the officer commanding the Corps, was keeping a list of ORs serving in the war. Together these two men produced a remarkable record of Reading School at War by publishing citations, obituaries and letters from those serving at the front. By December 1918 the Reading School magazine was reporting that 418 ORs had served in all branches of the services, of whom 77 had been killed or had died of wounds received.

It took a little time to re-invigorate the Club after the Great War. A committee met for that purpose on 8th February 1921 with the energetic figure of Marcus Love in the Chair

and the main item for discussion was the launching of an appeal for a War Memorial in the school chapel. The appeal was eminently successful and the Memorial commemorating the ORs who died in the war was unveiled during a service in the school chapel at 3 p.m. on Saturday 18th February 1922.

By April 1923 the Club was at full swing under the presidency of Joseph Wells, by now the Vice Chancellor of Oxford University. So strong had the membership become by December 1924 that the Old Boys' Club was able to field two Rugby XV's and the proposal to form a Rugby Club in the town was well advanced. By April 1925 a drama club had been formed and was giving annual performances at school.

By December 1925 as many as 200 members had attended the Annual Dinner at Palm Lodge, West Street, an Old Boys' Cricket Club had been formed and a Rowing Club (sic) was proposed. The first annual general meeting of the Old Redingensians Rugby Football Club was held at School on Friday 28th May 1926 and an extensive fixture list was organised including games against London Irish 'B' and London Welsh 'A'. The first London Dinner since the Great War, held on March 10th 1926 at the Criterion Restaurant, was attended by 68 Old Boys. At the 1927 Annual General Meeting representatives were elected to cover Oxford, Cambridge and London Universities and a branch was formed in India. It became clear that a home base was needed for the Rugby and cricket teams which had been 'lodging' on the GWR Athletic Association ground at Caversham. The solution was found with the purchase of a sports ground at Emmer Green, for which a mortgage was raised from the Rugby Football Union.

In August 1928 Dr. Charles Eppstein died and in March 1929 that great servant of Reading School and Wadham College, Oxford, Joseph Wells, passed away. Both these men were responsible for bringing the Old Boys' Club into being and sustaining it through the great crisis caused by the amalgamation with Kendrick Boys' School. Lt. Col. B. St. J. Warren Hastings, the first Master of the Reading Old Boys' Masonic Lodge, was elected President in 1929.

The last years of the 1930s were characterised by a falling off in membership and enthusiasm, coinciding, perhaps, with the political strains and changes in social attitudes experienced in Britain in the run up to World War II. The club was finding it difficult to compete with 'alternative opportunities for leisure' and 'scattered membership'. It appeared that members were complaining that they received only small benefit for their subscriptions.

The advent of WWII concentrated everyone's mind on matters of life and death for some time to come. George Keeton resigned after a notable headship and was replaced by Charles Kemp. Once again the Old Boys' Club was in wartime suspension with the officers of the Athletics Club called to defend

their country. Lt. Col. Warren Hastings died in 1940 after 11 years as President and it was agreed that the post should remain vacant until the end of the war. The editor of the school magazine kept things ticking over and "Sugar" Saunders, one of the great characters of the Reading School staff, painstakingly collected and published the names of those serving in H.M. Forces. As it did in the Great War, the Reading School Magazine published a remarkable record of the wartime exploits of ORs and "Sugar" Saunders' list contained nearly 1,000 names by the time hostilities ceased.

The first post-war meeting of the club took place in Big School on 8th December 1945 and was attended by 60 members. The names of 121 old boys and 2 former masters of the school who had lost their lives in the WWII were recited by Charles Kemp, the Head Master, who stated that moves were already afoot to place a War Memorial in the school chapel. The OR Rugby and Cricket Clubs were resuscitated with the cheerful news that some cricket fixtures had already been arranged. The Head Master described the likely effects on the school of the 1944 Education Act, which would result in the loss of the Junior School amongst other things. Wisely the Head Master and his predecessor, George Keeton, were elected Vice Presidents of the Club.

The Old Boys were determined to bear the full responsibility for raising money for the WWII War Memorial. W.E. McIlroy, later the Mayor of Reading, was elected President and the AGM and the first annual dinner since 1938 took place on 7th December 1946 in the Masonic Hall, Reading, with 120 members and guests present. J.L. Silo-Jones, who retired as Second Master after nearly 40 years' service with the school and 30 years' service as treasurer of the Old Boys' Club, was presented with a "gold watch and some money" and was elected a Vice President. By this time there was £569 in the War Memorial Fund, to which the Club voted a further £100 on the night.

The Old Boys' Club sports ground at Emmer Green was subject to a compulsory purchase order by Reading Council in 1946. In order to facilitate the purchase of a new sports ground, the Old Boys' Club decided to become a limited company. This was accomplished at a Special General Meeting in February 1951, when the Old Redingensians Club Ltd. was launched. The purchase of the present sports ground at Sonning was now completed. The WWII War Memorial Fund had, meanwhile, collected a considerable sum of money. In July 1948, at a service in the school chapel, the Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Reading dedicated the memorial panelling, on which were inscribed the names of the ORs who fell in WWII. The substantial balance of the fund was used, under the direction of a small committee, for grants for the children of the fallen to assist with their education.

The years between 1956 and 1959 saw a

steady growth in membership. It also saw a run of remarkable men as President, amongst whom were Sir Howard Roberts (1957), Sir Arthur Lawrance (1958), sometime Governor and Commander in Chief of British Somalia, and Major General D.T. Cowan (1959), who commanded the 17th Indian Light Division with remarkable success during the WWII Burma Campaign. During this period OR London Dinners were held in the House of Commons under the auspices of the old West Winger, Sir Richard Body M.P. Annual Dinners were racking up attendances of about 100, much as they do nowadays, but it was becoming apparent that the burden of managing the sports ground at Sonning was overwhelming the officers and committee. By 1967 it was clear that there should be some separation between the Sports Club and the Old Boys' Club. This was achieved in 1972 when the Redingensians Sports Club Ltd. was formed. The new limited company was greatly assisted by the donation of £10,000 from the widow of an OR, which provided the funds to build a new Pavilion.

For some time all was well and the Redingensians Sports Club drew its membership from Reading School. However, when the great majority of school leavers commenced to go to university, the club struggled to field teams. To survive it was forced to open its membership to men who had not been to Reading School. It drifted further and further from the parent body and is no longer the great recruiting ground for

the Old Boys' Club, which still, however, owns the land at Sonning.

Charles Kemp retired in 1966 after an outstanding career. He was highly regarded as a Head Master who had navigated the school through WWII and the effects of the 1944 Education Act with consummate skill. Many of his pupils have been, and remain, greatly influential in the leadership of the Old Boys' Club. His successor, Anthony Tilton Davis, who took over in 1966, was also a notable supporter of the Old Boys' Club. He was quintessentially English, being both a brilliant academic and a prominent amateur sportsman. He was also one of those characters who attracted fierce supporters and equally, though fortunately smaller in number, fierce enemies. His short but notable career was marked by a local government attempt to amalgamate Reading School with the Cintra School to form a local comprehensive. The Old Boys' Club gave its support to the Parents' Association in their successful effort to block the decision. This was when the Parents' Association truly came into its own. Since this event it has had the prominence in the government of the school that was once held by the old boys.

The Headship of John Bristow, commencing in 1980, was a period of relative quiet, though the school was starved of finance and relied heavily on the support of the Old Boys and the Parents' Association. It was during this period that Simon Oliver, who

became Honorary Secretary in 1983, began the negotiations which were to result in the Old Boys' Club becoming a registered charity known as the Old Redingensians Association Ltd. The change gave impetus to much needed modernisation and the new Association played a prominent role in the School's Quincentenary celebrations which took place in 1986. That year the School was visited by the Queen, a notable Summer Ball was held in a marquee on the school field and the ORs held a banquet in Big School.

The ancient connection between the Borough of Reading and the School was celebrated when Geoff Canning, who had held office as Mayor, led the Old Redingensians Association as its president in 1988. This was thought to have been the centenary year. In fact the centenary of the re-founding of the Old Redingensians Club was 1995, when J.W.M. Smith was President.

During his Presidency in 1992, Judge A.P.J. Babbington became the Old Boys' patron of the 'Reading School Organ Venture'. The then Director of Music, Graham Ireland, and G.W.O. Price OR raised £65,000, found a suitable church organ and had it installed in the school chapel. It was a remarkable effort because there was a major appeal going on at the same time, to which the ORs contributed, for the extensive building programme when the Page Building and the New Biology Labs were erected.

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