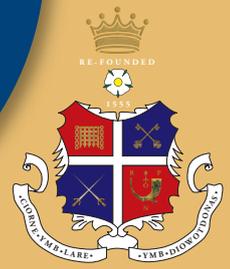


RGSn news

Issue 28 Winter 2010



HOUSE DRAMA COMPETITION

Students take control

JACK - DIVING STAR

His recent successes in recent competitions

WORLD CHALLENGE EXPEDITION TO NAMIBIA

Freya Mortimer tells us about
the fund raising expedition

Photograph by Joe Priestley



Specialist Schools
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WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER

Dear Parents,

The RGS News has been overseen by students this term and I am very grateful to Ellie Duffield for being prepared to take responsibility. I am certain you will be impressed with the outcome and I think she has enjoyed the responsibility!

The term has been excellent in many ways with many highlights; House Drama, the Carol Service, Speech Day with a large number of students returning from university to enjoy a wonderful speech from Gervase Phinn, sporting highlights, the autumn concert and an outstanding charity week with £10,000 raised for 'Teenage Cancer Trust'. The revamped House System has worked very well, with a wider range of house competitions and elected house captains. New events such as 'Masterchef' and 'University Challenge' have widened participation and students can now display their allegiance to the new house badge. The staff and the students have excelled in every respect and I am astonished by just how much can be packed into fourteen short weeks. The students have a tremendous amount of talent in so many areas and are very supportive of each other. The students were delighted by Jack Laugher's success in the Commonwealth Games and we all hope Jack will continue to develop in his diving career.

I have enjoyed meeting parents through the focus group which looked into communication. I invited any interested parents to volunteer their time to explore ways of improving communication between school and

home via a letter which summarised the results of the parental questionnaire. The concept of having parental focus groups is a good one and could be extended to other areas of the school's operation. The parental questionnaire overall was excellent but there are many ways in which the school can still improve further. Letters are regularly written and all are posted on the website too, so please check.

The loan application from the local authority was approved; the Astroturf project is out to tender and hopefully will be completed in the New Year. The news about the music block is not so good; there are gypsum voids under the site where the music block was planned to be built, so an alternative site is now being sought. This will inevitably delay the project I am afraid but I will endeavour to push the project forward as much as possible.

Many students are faced with external exams following the Christmas and New Year holidays and our best wishes go to them. The landscape has changed regarding exams and I hope the evening earlier in the term for fourth form explained the important changes regarding controlled assessments and GCSE modular exams in an increasing number of subjects such as geography, history and religious studies.

I hope you will have a very enjoyable Christmas and New Year and that 2011 will be a happy one for you.

Best wishes,

M L Pearman (Headmaster)

CHARITY WEEK 2010

The RGS institution that is charity week has, for another year at least, been and gone. If five days of singing, gunging and hilarity have taught us anything then perhaps it is that someone willing to donate money to see Dr Grime in a dress is a charitable person indeed!

Break-times saw the return of old favourites like the first year cake stall, along with a line up of performances ranging from student bands to Will Speirs' dazzling skills with the diabolo. Lunchtimes played host to the main events and with offerings as diverse as the physics department's rendition of 'Minnie the Moocher' to a frankly indescribable rugby-team beauty pageant, there was no shortage of entertainment to be had.

Another highlight was Wednesday's teacher vs. teacher gladiatorial combat. Mr Butler emerged as a clear winner although a moral victory must go to Mr Walker, his gallant if short-lived attempts to stay upright proving unforgettable. With the week coming to a close, Friday saw the eagerly anticipated staff panto. Teachers from all subjects joined together to turn the familiar story of Hansel and Gretel into a theatrical spectacular; the seven dwarves were a particular favourite, especially Mrs Fell's convincingly allergic (though undeniably rather tall) rendition of Sneazy.

The scope of charity week has always extended well beyond school hours and this year was no different. The charity ball, held at the Cedar Court Hotel, was a great triumph and special thanks must go to its organisers who ensured a memorable night was had by all. There was also a pub quiz which saw over a dozen teams take part and those who attended the Autumn Concert may have noticed some of the sixth-form braving the cold October night to raise money by washing cars. Finally, for the more adventurous there was Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge, this being the second year that RGS students have been sponsored to attempt it. Funds were also raised by the sale of branded merchandise; wrist-bands, bracelets and badges proving a popular way to show support. At present, the total looks to be approaching £10,000 although a steady flow of sponsorship and donations means a final figure may be some time off yet. Regardless of the precise amount we can feel rightly proud of a contribution made to a cause so worthy as the Teenage Cancer Trust. On behalf of the school officers, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone who helped to make this year's charity week such a resounding success. RGS has once again proved what a talented and remarkably charitable place it is.

Tom York, Editor's Assistant and Head Boy



FRENCH TRIP SUMMMER 2010



The start of the second year French trip 2010 was an emotional rollercoaster. Parents waited at the coach park bidding their children farewell, hoping they hadn't forgotten anything vital, such as a toothbrush! With the last

of the goodbyes said, we set off for France.

Most of us tried, and failed, to stay up until Dover by chatting to friends, playing iPods and texting other people on the bus, but eventually we realized we actually needed some sleep.

We arrived at Dover at around 4am. People gradually started to awake as the prospect of buying sweets, and getting breakfast, lured them on to the ferry. It was a new experience to see the Channel from the other side.

Arriving in Calais was exciting for everyone. To pass the time, Mr. Smith decided to put on some movies which received varying reviews. I think everyone had an opinion when he put Twilight into the DVD player. If you were sat downstairs, you could hear the sea of groans and the eruption of squeals coming from the top deck of the coach.

The chateau we stayed at was amazing and the swimming pool was a hit with everyone. The dorms gave everyone a chance to enjoy spending time together with their friends and I'm sure everyone, like me, has memories that they will never forget. On day two, the group were able to visit the beautiful 'Bayeux Tapestry' and then we saw the Arromanches German gun batteries that looked across the English Channel. Later in the afternoon they visited the American War Cemetery, at Omaha beach, where many soldiers lost their lives during WW2. The third day was spent on a blindfolded trail through the woods (and through lots of mud!). Then the students had a look around the Caen memorial museum (and ate lots of lollies!) During the next day, the group trekked up the magnificent St. Mont Michel and then shopped in St. Malo. The final day in France was spent on the beach in Ouistreham, where everybody splashed around in the sea and had a look around the shops and cafés.

One of the main highlights of the week was the talent show. The atmosphere was very friendly and everyone had a really good time. I don't think anyone will forget the giant Justin Bieber conga line from the trip. Louise said "I really enjoyed the French trip, being with all my friends and doing fun activities." Kimberley added "Everyone is still talking about how good it was!"

Lauren Langham 3A and Amber Hurry 3C



HOUSE DRAMA COMPETITION 2010

The House Drama competition (now in its fifteenth year) was designed to allow sixth form students to take complete control of the entire production process, from selection of the play to final production. There is minimal staff input – beyond a little gentle advice, and general liaison to set up the performances themselves, and the whole process comes together in little over eight weeks.

Whilst something of an experiment to begin with, the competition quickly became an annual fixture, and it yields a range of tremendous benefits and opportunities. For instance it allows opportunities to a far wider range of performers than the school productions do; it involves all the year groups, forging friendships and encouraging working relationships that will last throughout the youngsters' school careers; it allows younger students to learn from the experience and skills of older role-models. Most significantly, it allows the sixth form students who volunteer to organise the productions, a hands-on insight into the immense challenges of leadership. Whether in creating and explaining a vision, encouraging and directing lively cast members, attending to the huge range of little details that need to be covered, learning to delegate and negotiate their way through 'artistic differences' and to manage their time to juggle demands of work, home and their production itself, the

leaders are always rather changed by the end of the experience, and yet they never, ever fail to deliver!

This year's competition was without doubt the most impressive yet, with four very different plays which each managed to attain tremendous standards of quality and performance. The sixth form leadership was inspirational, and the enjoyment of the audience in packed houses on each night was matched only by the electric enthusiasm of each cast, and the sheer joy as they celebrated their production.

The judges, after much deliberation, finally awarded the prize for best overall performance to De Grey House, with their production of 'Lord of the Flies', with a special mention for the quality of the writing and characterisation in the Hutton House production of 'Cluedo' (written by Ellie Duffield). Best actor was Jonathan Pitts, and the best actress award was shared between Melody Swiers and Shannon Millar.

All four houses would like to thank all those who came to support the productions, and look forward to welcoming you again this time next year.

Mr Fell
Head of Lower School

CLUEDO (HUTTON HOUSE)



In June this year, Mr Fell called the first House Drama meeting of 2010 with all the potential directors from all four houses. We were told two things; firstly, that the next five months were going to be incredibly rewarding and, secondly, that they were going to push us to the limits of our

organization, planning, and time keeping skills – how right he was! By the time it came round to the performances themselves, we saw that it had been worth every minute.

To name but a few, there were outstanding performances from Lewis Haggerty, whose stage presence was perfect for the cruel, over-bearing Doctor; Donna Castle-Ward, playing Scarlet with impressive confidence and subtle vulnerability; and Sally Pitts, whose talent had previously impressed us and again did not disappoint, producing an absolutely stunning performance. We were incredibly proud of our whole cast, every single one of them performed to their best ability on the night, and the reaction from the audience spoke for itself. They were a group of people whom I grew very fond of working with – well done and thank-you all for making Hutton house drama so brilliant for us!

The standard this year was utterly astounding, and there has never been a closer competition for the trophy. There was a great variety in the type of plays this year – from original scripts, to Disney classics, to film and novel adaptations. It's always great to see younger students acting alongside sixth formers – an opportunity that doesn't exist anywhere else in the school.

This has been an incredible few months, and although it's all over for us, we're already looking forward to coming back and watching next year's plays.

Edd Riley and Ellie Duffield, Upper Sixth

MATILDA (SCHOOL HOUSE)

In seeking to adapt a full-length children's story to a 45 minute stage-play, the School House directors undertook an ambitious challenge, particularly since, when working with Roald Dahl stories, you are dealing with a national treasure, and with stories which are already vividly imprinted on the minds of the audience. Simply put, you have to get it right!

School House have a long tradition of laughing in the face of daunting challenges, and a large and talented cast of all ages threw themselves into this task with relish. From saintly to slobby, a host of memorable character performances brought the play alive, and a neatly adapted script managed to tell a vivid story within the time frame. Overall, this was a tremendous realization of this classic, quirky tale, and it depended on the directors being able to create a very specific mood and feel – something slightly fantastical yet recognizable.

This was a rip-roaring, crowd-pleasing beast of a show, fun to watch, and very obviously fun to act in. To return to the daunting challenge of putting on a Roald Dahl play, this house and its directors have very definitely got it right!

Mr Fell
Head of Lower School



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (PORTEUS HOUSE)



On a night when both plays depended on evoking very powerful feelings in their audience, this lovely adaptation of the beloved, classic fairytale and Disney film established and sustained a sense of simple delight from start to finish. Again, a huge cast of all age-groups was terrific to

see, and were lead by an unlikely combination of eccentric passion and calm phlegmatism by Tiff Mahoney and Jack Avery.

Costume was hugely impressive in this production, particularly the genius that allowed Lumiere to have actual candle-light at the end of his arms, and it was instrumental in creating the magical effect that was so strong in this play.

This was, perhaps more than any of the other plays, an ensemble piece, and for these to be truly successful depends upon a cast who have a very clear sense of their directors' vision, and an absolute commitment to their part in this. It is to the credit of the Porteus directors and production team that so large a cast fitted together so effectively, and produced something so genuinely magical. Everyone loves a good fairytale, and this was very good indeed.

*Mr Fell
Head of Lower School*

LORD OF THE FLIES (DE GREY HOUSE)

This was my first year involved in House Drama at RGS and I was pleased to direct the successful De Grey production of Lord of the Flies. Having heard much about the talents of the other houses and last year's De Grey win, there was a lot to live up to.

Auditions provided us with a small cast in numbers that turned out to be big in talent and well suited to William Golding's text. Outstanding contributions were made by Jonathan Pitts as Ralph and Fionnuala Morris as Jack, who complemented each other perfectly in showing the struggle for power on the island. Adam Makepeace's touching vulnerability as Piggy was further complemented by Mark Bryan's superbly portrayed Simon, which connected with the audience, evidenced by tears in many eyes as he powerfully played out the shocking death scene. These were further supported by a mature chorus ensemble from the hunters. I really enjoyed my first taste of House Drama and would recommend it to everyone. Finally, thanks and congratulations must go to everyone involved in this year's House Drama.

Ed Thomas, U6B



ONCE ON THIS ISLAND REPORT

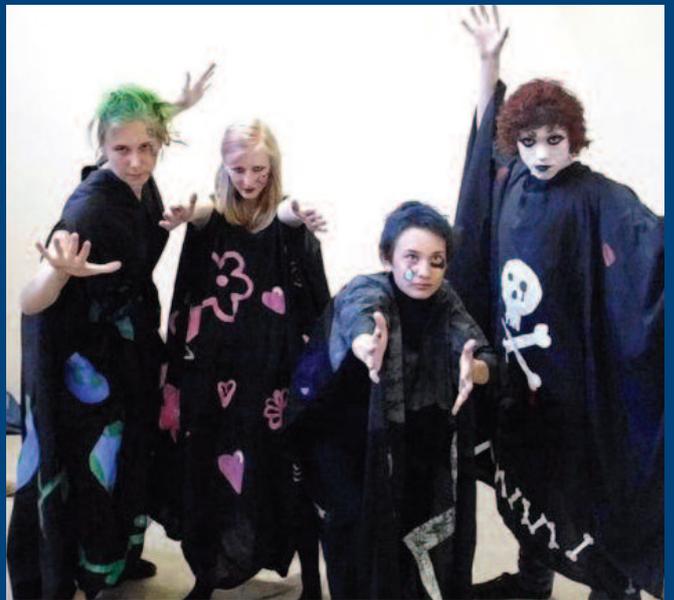
This June, the lower school put on a production of the musical 'Once On This Island', with the help of Miss Jackson. It was a very good performance which was enjoyed by everyone who came to see it. There were fantastic solo and group performances, and all the cast and crew put in a huge amount of effort to produce a great show.

The musical is set on a segregated island ruled over by four gods, the gods of water, earth, love, and death. The plot is the story of when a young peasant girl, Ti Moune, falls in love with a rich boy named Daniel Beauxhomme, whom she meets when he is injured in a car crash. She then sets off on a journey to see him again, and marry him, which eventually ends in her tragic death.

The preparation started early on in the year, with the auditions. The cast auditioned with a section of the opening song 'We Dance', and then we were narrowed down to find who was most suited to each part. We then rehearsed it, song by song, which was a lengthy process. Our 'dancing' for the first song, had to be changed into continuous hand-clapping because of our rather disappointing dancing skills!

There were some fantastic individual performances by most of the solo performers, notably Jonathan Pitts, ('Agwe, God of Water'); Sally Pitts, ('Ti Moune'); Sam Place, (Daniel Beauxhomme); and Adam Makepeace, ('Papa Ge, God of Death. Along with all the principals, the storytellers and chorus were fantastic as well and put in so much effort and help create a great show. It was a great experience, and I definitely enjoyed participating in it. I would encourage anyone of any ability to get stuck in with any drama performance, whether it's house drama, lower-school drama, or upper-school drama! Finally, the whole cast and crew wish to thank Miss Jackson for her guidance and direction without which the production would not have been possible.

*Robbie Aitken
4A*



WORLD CUP BECKONS FOR HANNAH



During a 'Rock It Ball' taster session at the launch of charity week, GB International and England Captain Tom Hildreth spotted that Hannah Hale had something about her that set her apart from the other students who took part that day. Hannah had never played before but Tom recognised her potential and since then has become Hannah's personal trainer and is honing her for the V2 Youth World Championship on February 20th 2012. Hannah has also been recommended to be on the 'Rock It Ball' national programme.

V2 is the singles version of 'Rock It Ball' and is played in a squash court. It is very gladiatorial and intense.

Tom intends to get involved with running a club at Ripon Grammar School in the new year as well as setting up a Ripon cub which will then be entered in the national league.

Mrs H Mackenzie



JACK – DIVING STAR!

Fifteen year old Jack Laugher has had a very busy year, taking part in senior diving competitions in Moscow, Fort Lauderdale USA and Xian, and China. His latest exploits have been with the British Gas Junior Diving Team representing the UK in the Junior European Diving Competition being held in Helsinki, where he won the 1m Springboard. In the final, Jack executed a consistent list of dives to secure his first 2010 European Junior medal. Jack won his second gold medal for Britain when he won the 3m Springboard title with an excellent performance. Jack has competed in the Junior World Diving Competition which was held in Arizona in September; here he finished first in both the 1 metre and 3 metre competitions.



His most recent success was his selection to the Commonwealth Games team. In one of his first senior competitions Jack performed very impressively; he reached the finals of the 3m Synchro Competition where he and his partner finished 7th and 11th in the individual 3 metre competition.



This has been an extremely busy and fulfilling year for Jack; it has seen him compete in both junior and senior Championships and achieve some amazing success – this certainly bodes well for 2012!

We wish Jack every success.

Miss S Gilfillan

STEP INTO SPORT CONFERENCE

On 21 October, 2010, Derek van der Westhuizen and I attended the 'Step into Sport' conference at Queen Margaret's School, Esrick with all of the other Young Ambassadors from their respective schools. The conference started with an introduction about the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics games and the role of a Young Ambassador to promote these games.

We then split into our chosen sports. I chose hockey and Derek chose rugby. The day was spent learning some basic skills and we were taught how to lead others and teach them the skills that we had just learnt. The session finished with us getting the opportunity to put our new found leadership skills into practice and coach a drill that we had designed ourselves.

The day ended with a chance to reflect on what we had learnt and what our roles would be once back at school and our local clubs. We also shared how we found the day with groups that had been playing other sports. By the end of the day, we had both received an award in our respective sports which will allow us to run our own clubs in school or help at our local clubs.

Emma Frost 4B

(RGS Sports Ambassador)



BRITISH BIATHLON REGIONAL QUALIFYING ROUND

Sunday November 7 saw twelve students from Ripon Grammar School arrive at the John Charles Centre for Sport to register for the regional round of the British Biathlon Championships.

First up for RGS was Laura Mackenzie, our only first form competitor who was well under the 40 second time for her 50m swim and scoring over 1000 points. Good performances from Anna Jeal, Ben Pilling and Ben Pease in their 100m swim left them all in touching distance of the sixth place cut off point to qualify for the next round. Next were Mabel Ellerker and Ines Wivell; Ines came second overall in the swim and Mabel third. James Woolfenden and Laurie Edwards battled hard to produce excellent times. Laura Terry put up a credible performance as the only fifth form competitor from RGS and then Amy Ellerker, Kate Robinson and Miles Woolfenden all swam well in the sixth form category with Amy finishing second overall in the swim.

Superb running performances from RGS then ensued with Laura Mackenzie running 500m in the first form race and all other competitors running 1km in the bitterly cold headwind.

The first six competitors in any age group qualify for the next round of the competition which is to be held in Macclesfield on January 30th. The results were as follows;

Laura Mackenzie – 7th

Anna Jeal – 3rd

Ben Pilling – 5th

Ben Pease – 8th

Ines Wivell – 2nd

Mabel Ellerker – 6th

James Woolfenden – 4th

Laurie Edwards – 5th

Laura Terry – 7th

Amy Ellerker – 2nd

Kate Robinson – 5th

Miles Woolfenden – 7th

This means that eight of our athletes go through to the next round – the most we have ever had. It was a superb day with loads of team spirit and I was really proud of everyone who took part. .

Mrs H Mackenzie



Parents' Association

NEWS FROM THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Our main purpose continues to support the school; this term we have been successful in raising over £1000.00 for the school, through selling refreshments at parents' evenings and other school functions. The comedy evening in September raised nearly £800.00. The committee work hard to raise money; however we rely upon parents attending functions and appeal to other parents to join us in running and organising fund raising activities. We have an annual financial commitment to pay £4000.00 for the lease of the school minibus; this past year we have exceeded this by over £2000.00.

You may have noticed that we sell second hand uniform alongside refreshments. If you have any spare uniform which is in good condition, please would you send it into school (Mrs Wakefield in reception). Our next event is Burns' Night on the 22nd January 2011; please either enquire about tickets through the school office or email your requirements to rgsparentassociation@hotmail.co.uk

As always we are planning events throughout the year and we very much appreciate your attendance at such activities. If any parents have connections with companies or you are able to donate raffle or auction type gifts, which we could use to raise money in the future, then please contact me through the above email address. Similarly if you have ideas regarding raising money, such as a sponsored walk or fashion show then contact me by email.

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone on the committee for their support and hardwork?

New members are always welcomed; contact me by email on the above address.

With regards

Mr J Tearle

Chairman Ripon Grammar School Parents' Association

SCHOOL COUNCIL 2010 ELECTION PROCESS

On Tuesday 5th October, this year's school council elections were held. The council provides an excellent forum for grievances or problems to be aired, and for positive action to be taken, so the role of the councillors in each year group is very important. Each year group has two councillors, with each council member's term lasting for two years, and annual elections being held to replace the council members whose tenures have come to an end. Preceded by weeks of frantic vote gathering and inter-candidate debate, the elections are an excellent chance for budding politicians to cut their teeth. Each year group held a 'Hustings' for potential councillors to put forward their policies and to be grilled by the audience. The election itself was a secret ballot, with voting cards distributed during form period, and locked ballot boxes positioned around school. After the votes had been counted, results were announced in assembly the following day.

Hugh McHale-Maughan

SCHOOL RECYCLING

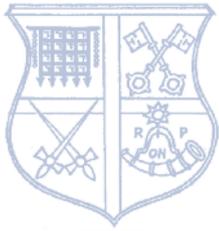
The consequences of pollution and resource shortages are becoming more and more apparent and RGS is determined to do its bit to help the environment. Students have expressed a desire to make a greater recycling effort at school. Aiming to fulfil this wish, the school council has been working on an improved recycling policy.

Given the volume of paper that is handed out at school, recycling was an obvious area on which to focus. Some quick maths shows that if a student receives an average of twenty sheets a week, then over a school year they get well over seven hundred sheets. For the whole school this equates to two thirds of a million pieces of A4 which if stacked on top of each other would be over six times the height of the science block! Trivia aside, this is clearly a lot of paper and an effective way of recycling some of it would doubtless have a significant effect.

We have contacted the local council and worked with teaching staff to try and introduce this to the school. The details are yet to be finalised but we intend to have a dedicated paper recycling box in every classroom, where students can deposit any unwanted sheets at the end of their lessons. Whilst we hope that everyone will contribute to this effort, there will be a particularly important role for a group of volunteers who will help to manage this system.

If the paper collection scheme is a success, it will hopefully provide a starting point from which we can expand our recycling efforts. We are also looking at collecting the cans and plastic bottles from lunch-time and the sixth-form vending machines. Having even been offered a shoe recycling bank, there are plenty of opportunities to explore. Watch out for an assembly at the start of next term when we'll explain more of what we hope to achieve.

Tom York, editor's assistant



President: Paul Freeman
Treasurer: Jenny Bellamy
Assistant Treasurer: George Ogram
Secretary: Jenny Bellamy
Assistant Secretary: Louise Watson

OLD RIPONIANS' ASSOCIATION

OUR OLDEST OLD RIPONIAN

We are sad to announce the death, in the summer of this year, of Alfred Green, who we believe might have been our oldest Old Riponian - unless you know better.

Alfred was born in Ripon, in Blossomgate, and lived in the city throughout his life, working until this year, in the family Monumental Masonry business. At the age of 92, he was still serving the school, on the committee of the Old Riponians' Association. The minutes of the last meeting he attended in February 2010, read:-

'Any other business-

Alfred Green brought up the matter of the stone tablet found when the Sixth-Form Centre was being built. It was in memory of Mr Kent, a teacher at the school. Alfred remembered his father restoring the tablet and offered to restore it himself when necessary. The stone is now in place behind the centre.'

We intend to include a more detailed obituary in the Spring edition of the RGS Newsletter.

Mrs J Bellamy

VOLUNTEERING IN UGANDA



At the beginning of May this summer, I left England to spend four months in East Africa. I spent three months in Uganda teaching and then a month travelling around East Africa. It was an incredible experience and one that I will definitely never forget.

I met the other twenty volunteers who were all on gap years at Heathrow and we all flew out to Nairobi where we spent a few days acclimatising and getting to know each other. A week was then spent at Lake Naivasha, just outside Nairobi, where we were shown how to teach and also taught about local traditions and culture in Uganda. My school was called Pilkington College and it comprised of 1500 students. I taught chemistry and mathematics for eight hours a week to around a hundred pupils, few of whom understood what I was talking about. The pupils I taught ranged from about 14 to 19 so I was teaching people who I knew were older than me;

when I first stepped into the classroom containing one hundred people, it was daunting. However, teaching was good fun and I did manage to keep them under control most of the time! I was then paired with another volunteer in the school; in the afternoon the two of us would go and play football or volleyball with the boarders until it got dark.

Part of the cost of the trip was a donation to the school; the school was very grateful for the veranda built on to two classrooms that was paid for by my donation.

After the three months of teaching in the schools, a few of us headed onto Kenya where we went to Mombasa on the coast for a few days and then down to Diani and then onto Tanzania where we spent a few weeks on Zanzibar. After this we enjoyed a safari

in the Masai Mara which was incredible. It was a nice, relaxing end to the trip and it was a tremendous experience visiting so many different places. The only downside was spending days and days on coaches travelling between places and on quite a few occasions we would see a coach overtake us and then see it in a ditch round the next bend with the passengers walking away as if it was nothing out of the ordinary!

It was a fantastic trip from start to end and I would recommend it to anyone. I learned a huge amount while I was out there. I experienced what it is like to live among different cultures and to live among people who have literally nothing but would give up what they had for you. As well as this, I think I definitely improved as a person; the trip gave me an insight into all these things and above all made me more appreciative of certain things in England that I think most people take for granted.

Alex Pearman, Old Riponian

WORLD CHALLENGE EXPEDITION TO NAMIBIA



The adventure began in January 2009, when we first started our fundraising to take part in the World Challenge expedition to Namibia; a few thousand pounds later and we were ready to embark on our trip. On August 18th we set off from school and landed in Namibia the following day. It was soon made clear, by our team leader Alistair, that the expedition was going to be hard work; taking twenty people through Heathrow airport was a challenge in itself.

Windhoek, the capital city, was our first real taste of Namibia. The sun was brighter than we had ever seen it; there wasn't a cloud in the sky.

The first few days were spent enjoying the African landscapes at Spitzkoppe and Twyfelfontein. Scrambling up rocks in the early evening to watch the sunset was incredible, and like nothing we'd seen before at home. Everywhere we went we were welcomed with fantastic hospitality, the locals offered to sing and dance for us in return we sang and danced for them. When we found we were lacking creativity, Theo stepped in, and choreographed a routine to the tune, YMCA. The Africans gave us a great performance, and it was really amazing to see their culture. Meeting the Namibians was wonderful; for the few hours we were with them they seemed like close friends. Using Marvin's sound system we all came together and danced to the Macarena; it was a surreal moment dancing away in the desert and something we will never forget.



We were all so grateful for the opportunity to go on Safari. We saw everything from rhino to zebra to springbok. The animals were fascinating and it felt magical to be surrounded by them. Spending time in Etosha National Park was one of the highlights of the expedition, not only because of the animals but also because of the power showers! It felt like such a luxury and we certainly took advantage whilst we were there.

Despite all the fun we had exploring the country, the most beneficial and inspiring part of the three weeks was visiting a remote school. We built a playground, a vegetable patch, and many sports pitches and redecorated their classrooms. Dr Caldwell even taught science lessons. The work we did, although small scale, made a huge difference to the school and it was evident that it was much appreciated. Handing over all the donations we collected from school and seeing the children smile was extremely emotional. Over the period of a week we met so

many people and we hope to have made some sort of difference to all their lives. The idea of keeping a relationship between our schools arose; to revisit the school would be amazing and we hope to stay in touch.

The expedition finished with a day in Swakopmund, sand boarding down the dunes. It was a fantastic way to finish such an immense journey.

Returning from the expedition has given us all the chance to reflect on the time we spent there; all the efforts we put into organising and raising the money were more than rewarded by such a memorable and moving trip. The challenge was full of some of the most important lessons we will learn about ourselves, but also about other people and cultures. All in all, it was a fabulous experience on so many levels, and one that left us not only inspired but also very dirty and in need of a hot shower!

Freya Mortimer

TOBY KINREAD'S ALBUM ART



I've always loved art and drawing, and last Christmas I received a Wacom digital tablet and Adobe Photoshop CS4. I draw with a special pen onto the tablet and what I draw appears on my computer screen so I can then paint it professionally using Photoshop. Last April, after a bit of practice, I started a blog to put my art on, and since then I have been amazed at the feedback that I've received. I started by mainly drawing caricatures of celebrities, where I would exaggerate the faces of them to capture some personality and humour.

Many celebrities started to see the pictures of them by me and through the internet I have had some great publicity. Celebrities such as B.o.B, Travie McCoy, Gordon Ramsay, Rihanna, Will Smith, Jason Derulo, and Usher have all seen their caricatures and some of them were kind enough to send me messages and tweet my work to their thousands of followers on Twitter.



More recently I have been doing a variety of pictures and not just caricatures. I have been experimenting with different styles of painting digitally and produced work such as the Lil Wayne portrait and the Kim Kardashian portrait. I have started to receive some incredible offers from people; I was asked to paint actor Ashton Kutcher which I did and he received it recently and told me to 'follow my dreams.' I am in the process of doing the album cover for hip hop artist Shane Eli. I've also been asked to design a T-Shirt for a clothing company in Canada and my caricature of Justin Bieber will be featured in a book about him. I have also been asked by Young Money to paint portraits of Lil Wayne and Drake.

I hope to continue enjoying my artwork and anyone can visit my blog to see what I'm working on at the moment and can leave a comment: <http://tobykcaricatures.blogspot.com>.

Toby Kinread, 5B



RAF SIXTH FORM SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS:

JONATHAN COATES AND KIERA CHAPMAN.

Two upper 6th students have been awarded prestigious RAF sixth form scholarships worth £1000 each. Jonathan Coates and Kiera Chapman will also have the opportunity to attend a week's residential leadership and development course in Wales.

Scholarships are awarded annually by the RAF to students who have demonstrated that they have the potential for a successful career as an officer. There is always strong competition, and it is an exceptional achievement for two awards to be given to students from the same school.

Kiera and Jonathan were presented with their awards by Squadron Leader Jim Tait, who regularly visits the school to speak to students who are interested in RAF careers.

Squadron Leader Tait was full of praise for both Kiera and Jonathan and quoted several glowing comments from the selectors.

Mrs F Wilson



'HELP FOR HEROES'



Photo courtesy of Ripon Gazette

Three Peaks fundraiser Georgie Brewer recently presented a cheque for £132.00 to 'Help for Heroes' county co-ordinator David Morgan, along with her brother Chandler and Bently Briggs who also completed the challenge in less than 12 hours.

Georgie Brewer, a fifth year student, climbed the peaks of Pen-y-ghent, Wharfedale and Ingleborough in July when she acted as the first-aider for the U-13 team from Ripon Rugby Club who were tackling the famous Yorkshire summits. Georgie earned her first aid qualification as a member of the Army Cadets in Ripon.

ENTERPRISE DAY!

Every year fourth years partake in an enterprise day, and this year was no different! Bright an early on a summer's day, the fourth years were gathered in the hall and briefed on our project. Compared to the last three enterprise days, this was a single day project, and we were all a bit nervous as to how we were going to complete the task before 3 o'clock, allowing an hour for presentations.

This year's task was linked to the 2012 Olympics. The year group was divided into twelve groups of about ten students, and then given a sport. The task was to design a building where your sport could be held, taking into account the facilities needed and the surrounding area. Events varied from the well-known track events to more unusual events such as wrestling and volleyball.

After a quick briefing from the guest co-ordinators, work got under way. Project managers were elected, who then shared jobs between the rest of the group. Most teams split their time between working as a group on the actual presentation, and researching and developing the model building.

The day was stressful for many, but we improved our time management and teamwork skills. The models were very inspiring and they were a testament to the day's hard work.

Grace Ireland & Hannah Hickingbotham, 5B

GLORIOUS GOODWOOD GREENPOWER NATIONAL FINAL OCTOBER 2010



The Carbon Comet gets away cleanly at the start of the four hour race

The RGS Greenpower team enjoyed a superb day of racing at the historic Goodwood motor circuit in glorious sunshine on Sunday 17th October. A convoy of twenty pupils plus staff and parents made the long journey to West Sussex for the eighth year in succession for the highpoint of the Greenpower calendar. There was a reasonable breeze early in the day which made it hard work for the electric powered cars during practice but this dropped to virtually nothing by the afternoon.

At 1pm the race began with all seventy-nine cars getting away cleanly without incident. Our best car, the Carbon Comet, slowly started passing cars making its way up from its starting position of thirty first to twelfth place after three hours in the hands of our first four drivers. Unfortunately, it developed gear problems during the final hour which made it impossible to use the highest gears so limiting its top speed. It continued in the lower gears but dropped back to sixteenth place. The team had high hopes of finishing in the top ten this year but are now even keener to complete our new car which will be an improvement on our two existing cars. The Comet's team was ably managed by Marcus Fenlon and Jonathan Owens (who monitored the progress of both our cars via his laptop in the grandstand!).

The Electric Chair, our faithful old training car now in its eighth final, got into its (admittedly slow) stride in the hands of six fairly

inexperienced drivers and worked its way steadily up from its starting position of 69 up to finish in forty fifth place on very old and tired batteries. Rachael Sharp and Rebekah Vanzo also did a superb job of managing the Electric Chair team.

Both cars beat all opposition from our (friendly) rival local schools. I am extremely grateful to Mr Thompson and the parents of RGS team members for their help and support during the weekend and for making it so enjoyable for us all.

Our grateful thanks also to our sponsors; Econ Engineering, Ripon Auto Electrics and York Cycle Works for their generous support of our electric car teams.

Mr S Mann



The Electric Chair team at work during a pit stop

LOWER-SIXTH WORK EXPERIENCE

For my summer work experience, I spent one week in London working for the Sunday Express magazine 'S'. It is my ambition to become a sports journalist, and naturally I jumped at the chance to gain any experience working for a national newspaper.

To begin with I was given requests such as finding pretty pictures of sewing machines for a weekly feature, which, admittedly, seemed very tedious at the time. However, this task made it apparent to me what journalists need to do in order to create an article we read, and take for granted, in our magazines and newspapers.

To me, it was also very surprising to see how far in advance an editor has to work to meet the demand of the weekly edition. For instance, on my second day, I visited several buildings and hotels in London, sampling a range of foods and products various companies were proposing to sell in the run-up to Christmas. I had to remind myself it was only July as I munched on the finest turkey and mince-pies Marks and Spencer's had to offer!

I was constantly in awe of the beautiful landscape of the capital; the hustle and bustle of London was stark in contrast to

the city I am normally used to in North Yorkshire. The vulnerability of the Press was highlighted when, on the third day, I stepped out of my building, which overlooked the River Thames, and was met with hundreds of policemen and pro-gay activists protesting about a recent front page headline of the newspaper.

Later on in the week, as my confidence and enthusiasm for football became apparent to my colleagues, I spent the afternoon working on the sports desk. Here I was in my comfort zone, and was at ease discussing transfer events with fellow lovers of the beautiful game. The proudest moment of my week was seeing my very first sports by-line published on the Daily Express website. I was amazed at the speed at which the story spread and was reported on numerous Premier League websites quoting my name as the source.

I enjoyed every minute of working for the magazine and newspaper, and found it an incredibly useful experience, not only in gaining an insight to the everyday lives of journalists, but also getting a glimpse of the London life-style I would one day love to be part of.

Charlie Savage, U6E

'A TASTE OF LAW SCHOOL'

On Saturday 23rd October, RGS pupils from the fifth and sixth forms were given the opportunity to visit Lancaster University, and experience a number of law based activities. I decided to take up the offer, and, as such, set off bright and early to Lancaster on the first Saturday of half term.

After a brief introduction from the director of admissions at the university, we plunged straight into the day. We commenced by observing a moot trial, demonstrated by the staff and graduates of the university. A 'moot' is a mock appeal trial, which has been used to hone law students' ability to present their arguments and develop their oratorical skills since the middle ages.

Following a brief question and answer session with law students and lecturers about law, university life and the application process, we proceeded on to lectures concerning different aspects of law. Despite their disparate nature, encompassing contemporary international politics, ethical law and the importance of the legal process within economics, they were all fascinating and thought provoking.

Congratulations go to Melissa Parker for being awarded the prize for best question of the event. It was a

rewarding, interesting and highly enjoyable day, and has prompted me to consider the possibility of studying law at university.

Thank you to Mrs Wilson for giving us the opportunity to attend the day!

Hugh McHale-Maughan 5C



SIXTH FORM MOCK INTERVIEWS

Interviews are a vital part of many application processes, be it for university or for a particular job. On the 11th and 18th of November all upper sixth students were given a mock interview to practice and develop their interview technique to prepare for these future encounters. Keeping as close to formal procedure as possible, each student was requested to compose a CV along with a cover letter detailing why they felt they should be considered for an opportunity of their choice. The interviewers were all volunteers and professionals experienced in interviewing. Before the interview day itself students were encouraged to prepare soundly by thinking about questions they could be asked and how they could demonstrate that they would be suitable for their chosen role.

For some students this was their first proper experience in an interview situation and many were feeling nervous about the afternoon. Each interview lasted for around twenty minutes and included feedback on the candidate's technique and how they could improve their performance.

Overall the students found this a rewarding experience, particularly those who had not yet had the chance to test themselves in an interview scenario. Mrs Wilson and I heard a variety of comments from students coming out of their interview ranging from "it made me realise I need to prepare more for the real thing" to "it was fantastic.... a real confidence boost.... thank you!"

Jess Burgess, Upper Sixth

THE PERFECT PRESENT COME RAIN OR SHINE

Looking for the perfect present this winter? Then look no further than the new Ripon Grammar School golf umbrella. Designed in the school colours and displaying the school logo, it's the perfect present for the golfer in your life or for those wishing to shelter from the worst that winter has to offer.

The umbrella is 30 inches in diameter and is competitively priced at £17.00, so why not bring a ray of sunshine to school funds by purchasing an umbrella?

Cheques should be made payable to 'Ripon Grammar School General Fund' for £17.00 and can be brought to room N2 at break times.

Mrs D Priestley



HOLIDAY/TERM DATES 2011 - 2012

	School Closes	School Opens
Autumn Term		Friday, 2 September 2011
Autumn half-term	Friday, 21 October 2011	Monday, 31 October 2011
Christmas	Tuesday, 20 December 2011	Monday, 9 January 2012
Spring half-term	Friday, 10 February 2012	Monday, 20 February 2012
Easter	Friday, 30 March 2012	Monday, 16 April 2012
May Day Bank Holiday	Thursday, 3 May 2012	Tuesday, 8 May 2012
Summer half-term	Friday, 1 June 2012	Monday, 11 June 2012
Summer	Thursday, 19 July 2012	

Please note that the school will be closed for Staff Training on:
Thursday, 1 September 2011, Friday, 6 January 2012, Friday, 4 May 2012,
Thursday, 12 July 2012 (Yorkshire Show) and Friday, 20 July 2012.

PHOTOGRAPHY

There has been a growing interest in photography recently amongst my peers, and to add a different dimension to this RGS News, I thought I'd take the opportunity to exhibit some of their stunning photos:



Dominic Veakins, U6A



Joe Priestley, U6F



Rory Buckle, U6B

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR...

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to and helped me put together this issue, particularly Mrs Priestley, Tom York, Jess Burgess, Joe Priestley, and also other members of the sixth form – it has been an increasingly hectic term for us all, so I've really appreciated your help. With it being our final year at school, I'd like to wish my fellow sixth formers good luck for the time ahead; both with exams and achieving university places they want and deserve. It's been my most busy, but most exciting term at school, and clichéd though it may be, I can't believe how fast our time at school has gone by! Finally, I hope everyone enjoys Christmas and their Christmas holidays. It is, in my opinion, the best time of the year – enjoy it!

Ellie Duffield

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