

RGSn news

Issue 30 Summer 2011



SIXTH FORM FAREWELL

Another school year is nearly over

WORK EXPERIENCE

Looking to the future

AUSCHWITZ VISIT

Visit to the historical sites of
Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland



Photograph by Charlotte Holstein, 4C



Specialist Schools
and Academies Trust
EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY



WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER

Dear Parents,

I hope that this edition of the RGS News finds you well. The editorial team of Stephanie White, Isobel Shaw, Lucinda Redfern and Amy Ellerker have done a super job and the quality of this edition is testament to their hard work.

There are number of updates to keep you informed of since my half term newsletter; there has been good news regarding the music block. The local authority have agreed to cover the shortfall of £174,000 for the project which means that it is able to proceed to the tender stage. This additional funding has been required to strengthen the foundations as well as to comply with BREEAM regulations to ensure the building has a small carbon footprint. The tenders have also been returned for the car park extension at the front of school; the project can be completed on budget and the work will take place during the summer holiday. It will create an additional 24 spaces for cars.

The second half of the summer term is traditionally very busy; a large number of curriculum related trips are taking place including many university visits for the lower sixth. There has been the Junior Production, 'The Jungle Book', as well as Lower School Prizegiving and an inspirational speech by Miss Genevieve Barr. The chosen charity for the sponsored walk at the end of term was the 'Yorkshire Air Ambulance', a charity close to the hearts of the Lower School.

Mrs Dawson, our Commercial Development Executive, has produced the first edition of the 'Clocktower'; the newsletter specifically aimed our former students to enable them to keep in touch with school. A copy has been sent to you earlier this term to keep you informed. Mrs Addison, parent at RGS, has been appointed the manager of the Ripon and Rural Learning Partnership. She will work with the two secondary schools and twenty primaries in the Ripon area on shared priorities set by the Ripon schools to benefit students in the area. This is a new and exciting role fully supported by all the schools in Ripon.

A number of staff are leaving at the end of term. Appointments for their

replacements have been made and more news about them will follow next term. Mr Lewicki is retiring from his post as Head of English and Mr Williams will be moving to Easingwold School as principal teacher of science. Dr Caldwell will be moving to St. John Fisher's School, Harrogate to be Head of Chemistry. Mrs Robertson is relocating with her family to St. Albans whilst Mrs Scott will be returning to France. Our very best wishes and thanks go to them as they pursue the next stage in their lives and careers.

Mrs Wise steps down as Head of Sixth Form and will continue as a Deputy in the Sixth Form Office, working alongside Mrs Fell. She has done a superb job over the last five years and the students have benefited enormously from her dedication and expertise in the role. Mr Fell will take over from Mrs Wise in September and Miss Raymer steps up to take over from Mr Fell as Head of Lower School. Mr Colley has been appointed as Deputy Head of Lower School. Our very best wishes go to them as they embark on these exciting new responsibilities within Ripon Grammar School.

May I remind you that letters have been sent home with usernames and passwords to enable you to access your son/daughter's personal details which we keep on the school's information management system? This will contain report data, timetable information for example as well as your contact details. If you have questions or need your username and password resending could you contact Mrs Lancaster at school by telephone or by e mail: ancasterc@ripongrammar.co.uk

Examination results await us in August and I am optimistic that we will secure a good set of A2 and GCSE outcomes. The calendar of events will be posted on the website outlining some key dates before the end of term. In the meantime I would like to wish you a very happy summer and look forward to seeing you next academic year.

Best wishes,

M L Pearman (Headmaster)

STAFF LEAVERS



Mrs C Scott

Mrs Scott joined us last September on a one year contract to teach French and Spanish. Having previously taught at Bedale School, Mrs Scott had been living and

working in France before taking up her post at Ripon Grammar School. We are extremely grateful for the work she has done in both French and Spanish, in particular successfully seeing through the school's first group of GCSE hispanists, three of whom are continuing with Spanish at AS level next year. She has also taught GCSE and A-level French along with third year Spanish. Our students have been very fortunate to benefit from Mrs Scott's excellent language skills, creativity, tremendous hard work and dedication. In addition she has had a pastoral role as a second year form tutor. We wish Mrs Scott very well indeed in her future career.

Mr S P Smith



Mrs J Robertson

Mrs Robertson joined RGS in September 2006 and very quickly established herself as a key member of the mathematics department. She has been an excellent colleague and friend:

extremely hard-working, efficient and well-organised and passionate about her subject...so much so that over the last year, she has been working in her own time FOR FUN on a further mathematics course! An outstanding classroom teacher, Mrs Robertson has built excellent relationships with all her classes, caring greatly about all her students and the progress that they make. She is reluctantly leaving to accompany her husband in his move "down south". We shall miss her immensely (and her baking) and wish her every success in her new school and much happiness in the future.

The Mathematics Department



Dr P Caldwell

It was 3 years ago that Dr Caldwell joined the chemistry department as an NQT, having taught in Gloucestershire on a GTP placement. Dr Caldwell inspired his students with his acerbic wit, outstanding knowledge of chemistry and enthusiasm for teaching pedagogy. He has shown a real commitment to the students in the boys' boarding house for whom he cares enormously. Dr Caldwell always encouraged students to think in his lessons and was not keen on giving the answer away without a good deal of thought. He is leaving to go to St John Fisher's in Harrogate and our best wishes go with him on the next stage of his career.

Mr R Williams



Mrs P Wilson

I joined Ripon Grammar School in September 1997 as the chemistry technician. I have very much enjoyed my time here and have been privileged to have worked with some wonderful

people. Although I shall obviously miss everyone, I am looking forward to spending more time with my horses and trying to bring some order to the chaos that is my garden. I might even find time to do some housework!

Mrs P Wilson



Mr R Williams

After five years at Ripon Grammar School, Mr Williams is leaving us to take up a promoted post as Head of Science at Easingwold School. I feel I am speaking for all of my colleagues

when I say it has been a privilege to work with Mr Williams and I know he will be sorely missed by students and colleagues in equal measure. Staff and students will remember Mr Williams for the calibre of his biology teaching, trips to Malham and 'The Deep' and his sage council as a sixth-form tutor. The biology department will certainly miss his ready wit and candour.

Dr P J Caldwell



Mr S Lewicki

'How beautiful it is to do nothing, and then rest afterwards.' I find this Spanish proverb attractive at the moment! I've really enjoyed my nineteen years at RGS and I know I will miss my students and my colleagues. I'm looking forward to spending a lot more time in the garden, walking in the country, and travelling to all sorts of places, as well as catching up with the huge pile of books waiting to be read and re-read. All this I know and have thought about, but I am hoping some new and unexpected challenges also come my way.

Mr S Lewicki



SIXTH FORM FAREWELL

It is difficult to believe that another school year is nearly over, and it is particularly poignant to bid 'farewell' to our U6 students who left us in May to prepare for their important A2 examinations.

The end of year events to mark the departure of the U6 students were most enjoyable and included a number of reflective and entertaining assemblies as well as an extremely well-attended evening for students and their parents. The evening was an opportunity for parents, students and staff to celebrate friendships made and activities undertaken, including the amusing (and perhaps for some slightly embarrassing) viewing of the Second Year French trip! It was also a chance to look forward to the prospect of higher education study, gap years or employment. We were pleased that Muse (a local photography company) was able to produce a photographic record of the event which will be available for students to view when, we hope, they will return for speech day in November.

We are most grateful for the many significant contributions made to the school by the U6 students through their studies, through their participation in a huge range of extra-curricular activities and also through their work in roles such as school officers, school prefects, form prefects and house captains.

We are confident that the students are very well-placed to look forward with confidence to the varied opportunities ahead of them. Our best wishes go with them and we hope that the students will be regular visitors to the school in the years ahead.

Mrs C Wise

To say I've spent a year longer than most at RGS, the eight years since I started have most definitely flown by; I can still remember the awkward first moments where finding a seat and, more importantly, a friend are your top priorities on your first day!

Fortunately for me, I came from a large primary school and was lucky enough to know at least 8 people in my form already, which certainly eased the first day nerves. Seven years down the line, however, and this was not the case: having made the decision to retake my Upper Sixth year, I was faced with the rather daunting prospect of joining a year group in which I barely knew anybody. I have to say, I was more nervous on my first day of this year than I was in September 2003, when I first joined the school. Nevertheless, I needn't have worried as I was welcomed to Upper Sixth 2010/11 with open arms and have never felt more welcome than when Mr Griggs introduced me to my new form and my name was met with rapturous cheers and applause from Michael Gilbert!

It sounds like a cliché, but the last eight years have definitely been some of my best; the thing I will remember most about RGS is the countless opportunities students are given to better themselves. Every year, I have taken part in an event which has drastically shaped who I am today, from the third form trip to Bewerley Park where team-building and making new friends are key objectives, to taking part in the French Exchange in both fourth form and lower sixth which helped me to decide my direction for the future.

My final year at RGS has changed my life completely; I have made new friends who I now can't imagine ever not knowing and I have also made decisions which will shape my future in an entirely different way. This year, through UCAS, I have applied to study French at an English university in Paris; most people seem to find this decision rather overwhelming since in September I will be moving to Paris for the next three years! I, however, cannot wait!

Despite it not being my original plan, if I were given the opportunity to make the decision again, I would retake the year without question; if not for the amazing friends I've made this past year then for the impact it's had on my decisions and choices for the future.

Daisy Newsome U6D

Taking a gap year between the end of the upper sixth and entering university was something I had intended to do since the idea was first introduced to me in my fifth year at Ripon Grammar School.

The reason behind this is mainly because I feel I need a break from academic study after completing my A-levels in order to gain the most out of university. However, the prospect of travelling to new and undiscovered places was also an enticing factor, to me anyway. Once I had definitely decided I was taking a gap year and had subsequently deferred my university entry for a year, the only issue now to resolve was to decide exactly what I was going to do. What did I ultimately want to get out of a gap year? When I started my research into gap-year companies I discovered that the opportunities were numerous and incredibly diverse: stretching from a year's work experience in industry to spending a year helping to save giant pandas in China. In the end, I took the decision not to travel with any specific gap-year company, but this is only because I am fortunate enough to have friends and family located around the world who are willing to give me accommodation. With the help of STA travel (a travel company for students) I discovered discounted around-the-world flight tickets were available for students just like me, and now along with my friend, I am planning to spend time in Hong Kong, Australia and California over the next year. It won't all be sightseeing though: since we are intending to spend three months out in Australia we have already secured part-time jobs as waitresses in a local boating club.

Jessica Burgess

OXBRIDGE APPLICATION

I first thought about applying to Oxbridge when a Cambridge tutor came into school to talk to prospective students, and I thought I would go just to see what he had to say. It was very informative, and what I found out about the application process gave me a good insight. The application to Oxbridge is full of forms and interviews, but a simple choice between Oxford or Cambridge.

I attended an Oxbridge event held at Newcastle through school, where I learnt a lot about the differences between the two universities, eventually deciding on Cambridge because of its league table advantage in engineering, and because it is a stunning city. You then have to choose your college, which I am assured is not a daunting prospect as you end up happy no matter where you go! I had the possibility of Robinson College, on Adams Road, but I ended up applying to Pembroke. I was given really helpful guidance for my personal statement and Supplementary Application Questionnaire (SAQ) which the University stipulates. I then had to attend two interviews, and an aptitude test at the college itself. Then all that was left was to wait for a decision.

Adam Robinson

(Adam has been accepted to read Engineering at Pembroke College, Cambridge)

I first joined RGS way back in September 2004, and the first thing I remember about it was how different school life was from how it used to be in primary school; the most noticeable thing being the huge amount of stuff that goes on, both inside the classroom and out. Within the first two weeks House Drama auditions had come and gone, Junior Drama had started, and I'd already begun learning a new instrument.

Over the years that followed, the subjects became more and more interesting as what we learnt became more relevant, and by the time it came to the end of third year I had discovered that science subjects were definitely what I enjoyed most! Chemistry was my favourite out of all the sciences, and I'm hoping to study it next year at the University of York.

One of the fantastic opportunities that I had in the sixth form was being able to spend one or two free periods a week assisting teachers with their classes. This was something I enjoyed immensely, and was lucky enough to have a chance to actually teach a couple of lessons by myself. I absolutely loved having the chance to do something like this, and it made me realise that teaching is the career for me.

RGS has given me so much over the years, both in academic opportunities, and in essential life skills. I have absolutely loved my time here, and will miss both it, and the people who make it what it is, immensely.

Edd Riley

NEWS FROM THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The past few months have been incredibly busy and, most importantly, very successful. We are indebted to the hard work of so many members of the committee and other parents who have helped with activities such as the art event, cake stalls and the summer raffle, in particular Alison Herbert and Ruth Campbell.

The end of this term sees us saying farewell to Val Mingay, who has been an active member of the Parents' Association for eleven years and who has been the person who organizes all the tea rosters for events held at school - a most unenviable job! This activity raises hundreds of pounds each year for the school and I am very grateful for her never-ending support, efficiency and lovely nature. I am sure we will see her at future events as a guest.

Sandra Bates also is leaving the committee. She has run the '200 Club' for the past few years and I would like to express our gratitude for all she has done.

Our first RAW talent art weekend in April was a huge success, raising £3545 for school funds. This included £1023 from the raffle of three paintings, £695 from the tapas evening and £864 from art sales. The silent auction raised £214, the café £294 and our promotional cake stall £400.

Hundreds of art lovers attended the weekend event, where more than £3,000 worth of paintings and sculptures by both student and local artists were sold, with 25 per cent commission from sales going to school. It was the perfect

opportunity for more than 30 of our students to take part in a major exhibition.

More than 100 parent volunteers, as well as those pupils who played live music throughout the weekend, made a big contribution to the success of the event. Thanks to all involved for their help.

Despite the cold, blustery conditions and the fact that there weren't many people about, our latest Ripon Market cake stall, on May 28th, to promote our Grand Summer 'Try Something New' Draw, raised £204.50. We also sold raffle tickets to the value of £160, making a total of £364.50, which was fantastic. Thanks to everyone for their help and contributions. At the time of writing we don't have details of money raised from our grand summer draw, but thanks to everyone for their support so far.

As new pupils join the school and pupils leave at the start of each new academic year, we need an influx of new parents to join the committee. We are dependent on this infusion of new parents so that we can continue to support the school and raise funds to help improve the facilities and equipment available to our children. If you are interested in joining us, or know of someone who you feel would be, then please ask them to contact me through the school office. Thank you.

Jonathan Tearle

Chairman, Ripon Grammar School Parents' Association

CHEMISTRY VISIT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

To kick-start the A2 course, lower-sixth form chemists took a trip to the University of Leeds on a Wednesday afternoon.

This trip allowed us to view sophisticated analytical techniques that we will study next term, such as NMR, MS, HPLC, IR and TLC. The machines used for such analysis are of such a high standard and cost that it is not possible for any school to own them. It was therefore, a great opportunity for us to see how these techniques are actually carried out and to see what the machines look like.

The afternoon was spent in two different workshops: one was theory based whereas the other allowed us to develop our practical skills.

We conducted our own chromatography tests using 'Thin Layer Chromatography' (TLC) and produced our own spectra by means of 'Infra-Red Spectroscopy' (IR) in order to identify whether our unknown sample of analgesics was aspirin, paracetamol or ibuprofen.

In the more theoretical workshop, we looked at three separate (and incredibly expensive) machines, including those for Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy (NMR) and Mass Spectroscopy (MS). We were warned to keep any metal away from the NMR machine as it had a giant electro magnet operating at -200°C, cooled using liquid helium. We also found out that this machine runs on the exactly the same principles as the ones used in MRI scanners.

Both workshops were a great introduction to the A2 topic of spectroscopy, giving us a context to understand the spectra we would be looking at, and firm foundations on which to build our understanding.

Fionnuala Morris L6B

RAFA FLYING SCHOLARSHIP

Recently Jonathan Coates, an upper-sixth student at Ripon Grammar School, was awarded the RAFA Flying Scholarship. The RAF Association support the Air Cadet Association by encouraging young people to develop both personally and physically. The RGS News caught up with Jonathan to find out more about the scholarship and his future with the RAF.

What does the scholarship scheme entail?

As part of the Flying Scholarship, I have been awarded the first prize of thirty-five hours flying training, meaning I will have a full private pilot's license (PPL) by September. The four runners-up each won 12 hours each flying training. The training begins in mid-July at South Warwickshire Flying school and I will be taught how to fly single engine civilian aircraft.

How did you apply for it?

I applied as a member of the Air Training Corps. The RAF Scholarship is awarded to members of the Air Cadets by the Royal Air Force Association so you have to be in the cadets to apply. I was short-listed with eleven others and then attended the 'Officer and Aircrews Selection Centre' (OASC) for an interview and aptitude test at RAF Cranwell. There was a series of aptitude tests which required us to multi-task, tested our reactions and co-ordination and presented mathematics and memory puzzles. Then we each had an interview for forty-five minutes where I was asked about my life, education, hobbies, the RAF and current world affairs.

Where was the awards ceremony held?

I collected the award at the RAFA conference in Eastbourne in May. It was presented to me by Air Marshal Pulford who is the 'Assistant Chief of the defence staff' in the MOD.

Are you interested in a future with the RAF?

I was applying for university sponsorship from the RAF but the defence cuts meant the application had to be terminated. I am hoping to apply to be a pilot in the RAF when recruitment re-opens, but I am hoping to go to university to do an engineering degree whilst I wait. The scholarship covers some of the costs of becoming a commercial pilot, so I also have hopes of joining an airline if I am unsuccessful with the RAF.

Interviewed by Stephanie White

ON THE HUNT FOR TRASH TO TREASURE

Four RGS teams battled it out to have the chance to visit the Bettys & Taylors headquarters in Harrogate on Friday 24th June to take part in the Harrogate & District Enterprise Challenge 2011. The four teams enlisted the help of a group of Year 2 pupils from Holy Trinity Infants School to try out the workshops the pupils had devised to turn trash into treasure.

Congratulations to Second Hand Beats who won through to the final on Friday.

RGS students pictured are Harry Cleary, Elliot Fearn, Donna Castle-Ward, Annabelle Blyton and Bethany Abel. All are in form 2A.



AUSCHWITZ VISIT

'If we were to hold just one minutes silence for every victim of Auschwitz, we would be standing here for three whole years.'

These were the powerful words of Rabbi Barry Marcus during the final part of our visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau museum, the memorial service.

In March, Lawrence Holmes and I visited the historical sites of Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland, as part of a visit organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust, an organisation that places the emphasis on 'hearing is not like seeing'. Their aim is to educate today's youth on the horrors that occurred less than 70 years ago, with the idea that, through education, we can eliminate the possibility of a similar event occurring again.

As a keen historian, I have always had a particular interest in Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, however no amount of research could have prepared me for what I was going to experience in Poland.

The visit to Auschwitz I involved a guided tour of the former concentration camp. In each building there was some sort of memorial to those who had passed through Auschwitz. In one building there were hundreds upon hundreds of shoes, each pair unique and personal to the former owner - yet here they were

on display in a cabinet. This was a powerful moment for many in the group, because on seeing the shoes, we gradually began to identify that each of the 1.5 million who were murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau were, in fact, individual people. Each person had their own individual story, their own life.

Moving through the camp we saw similar cabinets but this time they contained suitcases, glasses, crockery, or clothes. The more we saw the more we felt the horrors, which had occurred there. On paper we see just a number, there is no personal connection to each of the 6 million Jewish people who were murdered during the holocaust, but here we felt the reality of it all, and it is a feeling I will never forget.



Suitcases from the victims at Auschwitz

However, undoubtedly, the most haunting part of the tour was walking into the gas chamber and the crematoria, the underground room where thousands perished. Walking into the gas chamber is something no words can describe. This was the moment where everyone in the group realised the reality of the holocaust. Looking closely at the walls you can still see the scratch marks made by the people as they struggled for their last breaths. It was here we finally felt the impact of what hatred can do.

After our tour around Auschwitz I, we drove the short distance to Birkenau or Auschwitz II. The short distance we travelled in the comfort of the coach was a journey made on foot by thousands of prisoners on their way to the death camp. The visual difference between the two camps is huge; while Auschwitz is relatively self contained and composed of brick buildings, Birkenau is a vast area of open land enclosed by barbed wire. It is difficult to describe just how extensive this 400-acre camp is, but by visiting you are able to see how it was possible for so many people to have been murdered there.

However, it is not the visual difference, which most affects you at Birkenau, it is the silence, and the feeling of emptiness. Whereas at Auschwitz we could see the individual belongings and buildings, Birkenau is just a desolate area containing the few remaining barracks, empty of everything save the wooden bunks the prisoners were forced to share, five to a bunk.

We walked through the camp, along the former path of the thousands of victims who had made their way straight from the railway track, which runs through the centre of the camp, towards the extermination buildings hidden behind rows of trees. However, unlike at Auschwitz, all that was left of these extermination buildings were piles of rubble, the remnants of the Nazi's attempts to disguise their horrific crimes.

To end the tour of Birkenau, we visited a room full of photographs of pre-war life, to emphasise the idea that each of the victims had a former life, they had families, and that they were in fact human.

The extermination of the Jewish people, and the other minority races was done so effectively that they managed to dehumanise the victims, so much so that when looking back we see only the figures, not the faces.

The aim of our visit was to change this idea and to humanise each of the victims. Seeing the photos was perhaps the most emotional part of the visit for me. Each smile, each hug, each pose was a reminder that each of these people had a life, and no human had the right to decide that their life was insignificant.

There are so many lessons that we can learn from the Holocaust, which is why I think it is so important for everyone to experience, or at least learn about, the horrors which can occur, when hatred becomes an integral part of society, and we should therefore endeavour to challenge acts of prejudice or discrimination in both our communities and society at large, to ensure that nothing like this can happen again.

Annabel Ward L6A



The entrance to Auschwitz which reads 'work will set you free'



A picture taken looking away from the former extermination buildings towards the entrance to Birkenau.

SIXTH FORM GEOGRAPHERS' VISIT TO SWINDEN QUARRY, GRASSINGTON!

In May the intrepid Upper Sixth geography group set off to investigate whether large scale quarrying could co-exist with other activities such as tourism in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

The group were equipped with trend-setting clothing and headgear as shown in the photograph and were welcomed by representatives of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. The students were given a fascinating tour of the 'lunar-like' landscape of the quarry and presented with a range of interesting information about the operations of the quarry and about the planning processes which had taken place to try to resolve the conflicts between different users of the beautiful limestone area.

Mrs C Wise



DUKE OF EDINBURGH

The Duke of Edinburgh programme is an award scheme which is available to young people aged fourteen to twenty-five at three progressive levels; Bronze, Silver and Gold. To complete each award, a person must complete four sections: helping the community, a physical activity, an activity involving a skill, and planning, training for and completing an expedition (the amount of time a participant must dedicate to each activity increases as the awards progress).

There are many reasons to take part in the scheme: to experience new things, to discover talents you never thought you had and to challenge yourself. It is also highly regarded by universities and employers, who recognise the beneficial impact it has on people who have achieved a DofE award.

"The Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award enters students' lives in the fourth year, with an opportunity to complete it by the end of the year.

Although the thought that springs to most people's minds is an idyllic scene of camping and pleasant strolls through the countryside, the expedition is only one of the four elements of the award.

The expedition involves walking for two days and camping for a night, as well as map reading, cooking a meal on a stove, working as a team, putting up a tent, among other skills. The other activities are volunteering, a physical activity and a skill. There are almost limitless options for these – obvious choices like helping with a scouts' group, playing tennis, or learning the piano, to some more intriguing options such as being a DJ in a local youth club, learning how to skydive or learning to knit! It's not an easy award to get but all the students find it very fulfilling and a lot of fun. Listen out for opportunities to get involved in September.

The award continues for students in the fifth year and the sixth form at Silver and Gold levels respectively. At the higher levels the duration of each aspect of the award is increased, and a greater emphasis is placed on students organising activities independently. Integrating the demands of school work, social life and the award provides a fun and satisfying challenge!"

Mr P Thompson

"I am currently undertaking my Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award, which will finish this summer. For my physical section I have been swimming for 6 months, for my skill I have played the violin for 3 months and I have been coaching swimming as part of my voluntary section for 3 months. Every Wednesday we have attended sessions where we brush up on our map reading and learn new skills essential for DofE. I am thoroughly enjoying this experience and I find it really rewarding. It's a great opportunity and we have loads of fun, including lots of banter. Although it can be extremely challenging at times, it is an experience I would recommend to anyone as it is not only a personal challenge but it can also enhance your CV."

Mabel Ellerker 4B

"I'm currently working towards my Gold Duke of Edinburgh award with a group of other lower-sixth formers. Having done the Bronze Award in the fourth year, which I really enjoyed, I have been enthusiastic to do the Gold Award.

I'm really enjoying taking part in the scheme for a number of reasons. It really pushes you into doing activities that perhaps you would never have considered such as different sports, skills, and ways of volunteering. I also enjoy it because you get to know people in your year group who you might not know so well. I would say that for me the award is about being active and doing something outdoors, which I love. With a good group of friends, even the largest hill doesn't seem quite so terrible!

I've tried to be as varied as possible for each section of the award, playing the trumpet in Big Band for my skill, swimming for my physical, and volunteering to teach younger children tennis at my local club. As far as the expedition goes, we have been preparing since Christmas by doing a short first aid course and route planning. Both the practice and final expedition will be in the Lake District and we will walk for four days and camp for three nights.

A final section of the Gold DofE Award is a "residential stay" in which participants spend five days and four nights partaking in a shared activity with people they don't know; this section helps to build your confidence and teamwork skills, as well as allowing you to have some independence.

Now all that is left to do is to finalise the routes, purchase a large number of Mars bars, and hope for good weather!"

Kate Robinson L6D

GREENPOWER ELECTRIC CAR COMPETITION

Electric Car Developments

The RGS Greenpower team have had another busy term developing our two electric cars. For the 2011 season all teams must use smaller batteries with only two thirds the capacity. The cars could go just as fast as before if we wanted but we certainly wouldn't manage four hours of continuous racing. A considerable amount of our time this winter has been spent modifying our two current cars to accept the new batteries, including mounting them as close to the floor as possible to lower the centre of gravity and improve stability. (Not that our cars have ever had a problem in that area!) The Carbon Comet has a new seven speed Shimano hub after the last one failed at the Goodwood final costing us a place in the Corporate Challenge at Silverstone in May – curses!

North East Heat – Croft Motor Circuit

By the time you read this we will have attended the North East Heat at Croft Racing Circuit (July 6th). Both our cars have savoured victory at the circuit in the past and we hope to secure a position at the national final at Goodwood with a top three finish. We have made it to Goodwood every October for the last eight years but the performance of the cars increases every year.

We have also been working on the carbon fibre body of our new car which will hopefully see the light of day in early 2012. It is still unnamed but generally referred to as 'The Blue Whale'. Like the 'Comet' it features a carbon fibre monocoque body with no separate chassis to save weight. It will feature a

continuously variable gearbox and disc brakes. Both Greenpower juniors and seniors have been working hard on its construction, ably managed by Greenpower veteran Jonathan Owens, now in his sixth year with the club. Our new car should see us challenging the top contenders once more.



Some Greenpower juniors carving the "Blue Whale" into shape

Goodbye for now Rachael!



A young Rachael Sharp checking the weight of the "new" Carbon Comet back in 2005

I would like to express my grateful thanks to Rachael Sharp for seven years service to the RGS Greenpower Club. She has helped to design and build all our cars, crashed them, repaired them and travelled thousands of miles to race events around the country. She has also bossed us around and organised our teams. We certainly wouldn't have enjoyed the same level of success without her unstinting work (and cakes). Enjoy your future studies Rachael!

Mr S.Mann

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Over the years I have undertaken a variety of voluntary work, as it is something I am very passionate about, and because I believe it's a fantastic way to help out the local community.

I volunteer in different areas; such as sports coaching, primary school teaching and helping to prepare the press releases for Ripon Rock-It-Ball club, all of which I thoroughly enjoy doing. So when I was short listed for the "Volunteer of the Year" award, which is organised by Ripon Rotary Club, I was amazed and felt really honoured that I had been nominated.

On the evening of the presentation every nominee had to produce a ten-minute presentation, explaining to a large audience about all the voluntary work that occurs. It was a really interesting evening seeing the successes of all the other candidates and hearing about the different types of voluntary work that people from Ripon have done. I was really surprised to hear that I had won one of the main prizes as 'Volunteer of the Year', as all the other candidates were superb. It was a memorable evening and one I will not forget. I would like to thank Mrs Mackenzie, who put me forward for this award, and I would recommend that as many young people as possible to get involved with voluntary work as it is such a worthwhile and rewarding experience..



Amy Ellerker



President/Secretary:
Mrs Jenny Bellamy
Treasurer:
Mr George Owram

OLD RIPONIANS' ASSOCIATION



CONGRATULATIONS TO MICHAEL WALLACE,

former Deputy Head and Head of Physics at Ripon Grammar School, who was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Honours List for 'Voluntary Services to the National Railway Museum'.

THE CHRISTMAS REUNION for all former members of the school (staff and students), whether you are members of the Association or not, will be held at the school on December 17th. We will begin with our AGM at 12.30pm, which is open to all, but only members of the Association can vote. This will be followed by our usual afternoon of matches, many of which will be held in the Sports Hall or the astro turf. The afternoon will end with tea for all in the school hall.

JULY 14TH 2012- A DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES

We intend to mark the 50th anniversary of the amalgamation of Ripon Grammar School with Ripon Girls' High School. It will be on similar lines to the 450th Anniversary of the re-founding of the school and Old Rips will be working with the school as we did in 2005 - further details of this event to follow in due course.

Sqn LDR STUART HAGUE

On July 11th, at 1pm exactly, Old Riponian, Sqn Ldr Stuart Hague led the Queen's birthday fly-past over Buckingham Palace and the Mall in his Chinook helicopter. He believes it was the first time that a helicopter had been chosen to lead the fly-past, reflecting the importance of the role played by helicopters in Afghanistan, where he will be returning for another tour of duty in February 2012.

After the event, Stuart sent me some of his memories of the actual fly-past.

'... For some reason after so much planning we didn't feel too nervous until ten minutes before we were due over the Palace. My co-pilot was busy working through the maths to get us overhead based on a GPS time versus the headwind. Luckily, we had enough time to test our ground speed so when we turned in for the final run we knew we were within 5 seconds!

I gave myself a peek at the assembled family as we went over the balcony, and the view over the crowds on the Mall with all the flashes going was tremendous. The timing had to be to the second as the formation behind were all accelerating at different speeds, but it all worked perfectly.

The Queen sent us a message afterwards to say that she was delighted. A very proud moment for an Old Riponian!

Jenny Bellamy

WORK EXPERIENCE

West Yorkshire Playhouse

For my work experience placement I went to the West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds. I have always loved acting so I was very keen to go to the theatre to see what happens behind the scenes. During my week there I was based in the Arts Development Department which entailed helping with primary school reading and drama workshops; handing out flyers to businesses to advertise forthcoming productions and doing some arts and craft work. However, during the week I was offered a variety of tasks to give me a feel of what happens at the West Yorkshire Playhouse. I visited the Marketing Department where I sat in on a stressful meeting and sorted through some paperwork; I watched a matinee production on Thursday afternoon and I visited the First Floor which is the Creative Department for young people. However, the highlight of my week was helping out on 'Heyday.' Every Wednesday at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, people over the age of fifty-five come and do a variety of workshops during the day. The Heyday made me realise the variety of work that goes on in the theatre during the week. For example, I never thought I would walk past a room and see people over the age of fifty-five belly dancing to Indian music! Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my work experience placement at the West Yorkshire Playhouse and it has definitely been an eye-opener for the future.

Jonathan Pitts 4C

Clock Tower Dental Care

Most people hate going to the dentist, but for my work experience I actually chose to spend a week there! I started my day at 9am and finished at 5pm with an hour for lunch. After a short induction on the first day, I began my work in the surgery, mixing some filling material. I really enjoyed the whole experience; the feeling of independence and working in a team. There were ups and downs; watching a two hour long root canal treatment can get a bit tiring, and climbing up the three flights of stairs every morning certainly gave me some exercise!

But, overall, I had a great time. Everyone there was really friendly, welcoming and happy to answer any questions. I particularly enjoyed watching some of the cosmetic work but also meeting all the different patients. I gained a lot from my work experience as I now feel motivated towards achieving my goals.

Rebecca Newman 4C

S Magazine

For my work experience I visited 'S Magazine', the fashion and lifestyle supplement to the Sunday Express, located in the head office next to the River Thames in London. I've always wanted to pursue a career in journalism and media so being a magazine assistant for a week was ideal. Most of the time, I was being generally helpful in the office; making tea and coffee, returning products to the couriers and the post room, researching products, writing captions and assisting members of the fashion and lifestyle team. Some of the highlights of the week included assisting on a photoshoot, meeting Wagner from the X Factor, seeing items and news that hadn't yet been released and contacting press offices.

However, it's called work experience for a reason. The week was hard work and tiring due to the long tube journeys, but the experience was ultimately invaluable. It's helped me realise that journalism is what I want to do and I've learned things that you just can't learn in the classroom about a career in journalism, and the wider working world. I was lucky to be able to stay and do my placement in London; it may have caused some extra paperwork, but it was certainly worth it! My advice to anyone who still has work experience ahead of them is to make the most of it. Don't just think of it as a week off school that doesn't really matter, but as one step closer to your future career.

Freya Rose 4D

THE RE TRIP LONDON

At 7am on Friday 27th May, a group of second year students set off to London on an RE trip. We were in for a fantastic time, spending three days exploring the wonders of our great capital city.

I don't know which memory I like best. Was it the amazing performance of the Lion King at the Lyceum Theatre? Or maybe it was the London Observatory, standing on the Prime Meridian line and watching a film about the Universe in the Planetarium? Madame Tussauds was great - we all got the chance (almost) to meet those celebrities whom we hear about every day, and for those who were brave enough, there was the chance to descend into the screams in the Chamber of Horrors.

On top of all of this, we visited two amazing Hindu Temples, one of which was made entirely out of marble, and the other had a sacred cow sanctuary. We had a walk in Hyde Park where we saw the Princess Diana memorial garden and we also had an evening quiz. On the Saturday evening we watched Barcelona beat Manchester United in the Champions League Final on TV. We



had an exciting trip on the London Eye, followed by a cruise down the river Thames. On the last day, we went to the superb Natural History Museum, which is opposite Baden Powell House, the hostel where we stayed.

All-in-all, it was a really great trip and we returned exhausted but happy on Sunday night at precisely 10 pm, exactly as it said on the itinerary! Many thanks to our teachers Mr Clarke, Mr Colley, Mr Auger and Mrs Dring who gave up their entire weekend to spend it with forty-four delightful children! It certainly was a weekend to remember!

Donna Castle-Ward 2A

RGS PHOTO CLUB



Mr G Davis

This new club has been formed to give the school's budding photographers a chance to take even more photographs. Open to anyone who wants to create and exhibit photographs, the meetings will give members an opportunity to discuss, analyse and learn from each other's work.

The club is centred around a monthly photographic assignment, its subject being chosen by members to encourage the development of creative and individual responses. The resulting images will be displayed on the school's screen in the entrance foyer and on a new 'Photo Club' exhibition board. Prints can also be offered for sale at the annual RGS Art Weekend Exhibition. Other assignments

will include front covers for the RGS News, promotional photos for the school plays and material for the school website.



Joshua Ho, 3D

George Robinson, 3D

Photography trips are a possibility and, although they will be out of school hours, an after school or a Saturday morning trip to Brimham Rocks or the Deer Park could be really good fun.

The club has had one rather chaotic meeting so far, but the enthusiasm is evident and hopes are high for the development of a thriving group of creative photographers and image makers.

Mr Glenn Davis

NEWS FROM RGS LIBRARY

The Truth About Time

Since Easter the library has been working closely with the science department and all four first year groups on an astronomy project. Pupils have been research the ancient astronomers Galileo, Copernicus and Ptolemy and how their views differed from those of the Church. They have also looked at how the ancient astronomers measured time.

As well as the astronomy focus, the project was designed to enhance the students' independent learning skills, encouraging them to plan their work carefully and to carry out research in the most efficient way possible. Working in groups, first years then had to pull together all the information they had found to produce a presentation to be given to the rest of their class and to be evaluated by their peers.

Everyone, including the science teachers and Mrs Dring, the Librarian, thoroughly enjoyed the project. Here are some of the things the pupils enjoyed the most:

- "It was fun to work together and find out our own information."
- "Working alongside people."
- "Watching the presentations."
- "Evaluating other people's work."

Take a Look

The Librarians' creative juices have been flowing this term with several new displays to inspire and encourage.



In the IT room a newsboard now keeps us all up-to-date with what's happening around the world.

If you're waiting in the lunch queue, take a look at all the films that started life as books and challenge yourself to read them all! They're all available from RGS Library.



Come to the main library if you'd like some useful revision tips.

Greenaway Medal Shadowing Scheme

During their Library lessons first years have been looking at the titles shortlisted for this year's Kate Greenaway Medal.

This award is given annually by school librarians for an outstanding book in terms of illustration for children and young people. We thought about how the artist goes about creating their illustrations, why they choose the colours, styles, shapes and media they do and how the pictures link with the text in the books.

It was lovely to view books from a different angle and remember how much we all enjoy looking at a good picture book. The first years then created some wonderful bookmarks based on the shortlisted title

After half term several first years will accompany Mrs Dring on visits to our feeder primaries where we will share our enthusiasm about these books with Y6 pupils.

Mrs Dring, Learning Resources Manager



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September

- Fri 23 Tea for first form parents at 4.15pm
- Tue 27 Fourth form parents' information evening at 7pm

October

- Thur 13 Autumn Concert
- Mon 17 - Fri 21 Charity Week
- Fri 21 School closes for half term at 3.55pm
- Mon 31 School re-opens

November

- Nov 1 Fifth form parents' evening 4.30pm – 7pm
- Fri 4 Speech Day at 2pm
- Wed 9 Upper Sixth form parents' evening 4.30pm – 7pm
- Thur 10 - Fri 11 House Drama

For further information please contact us:

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