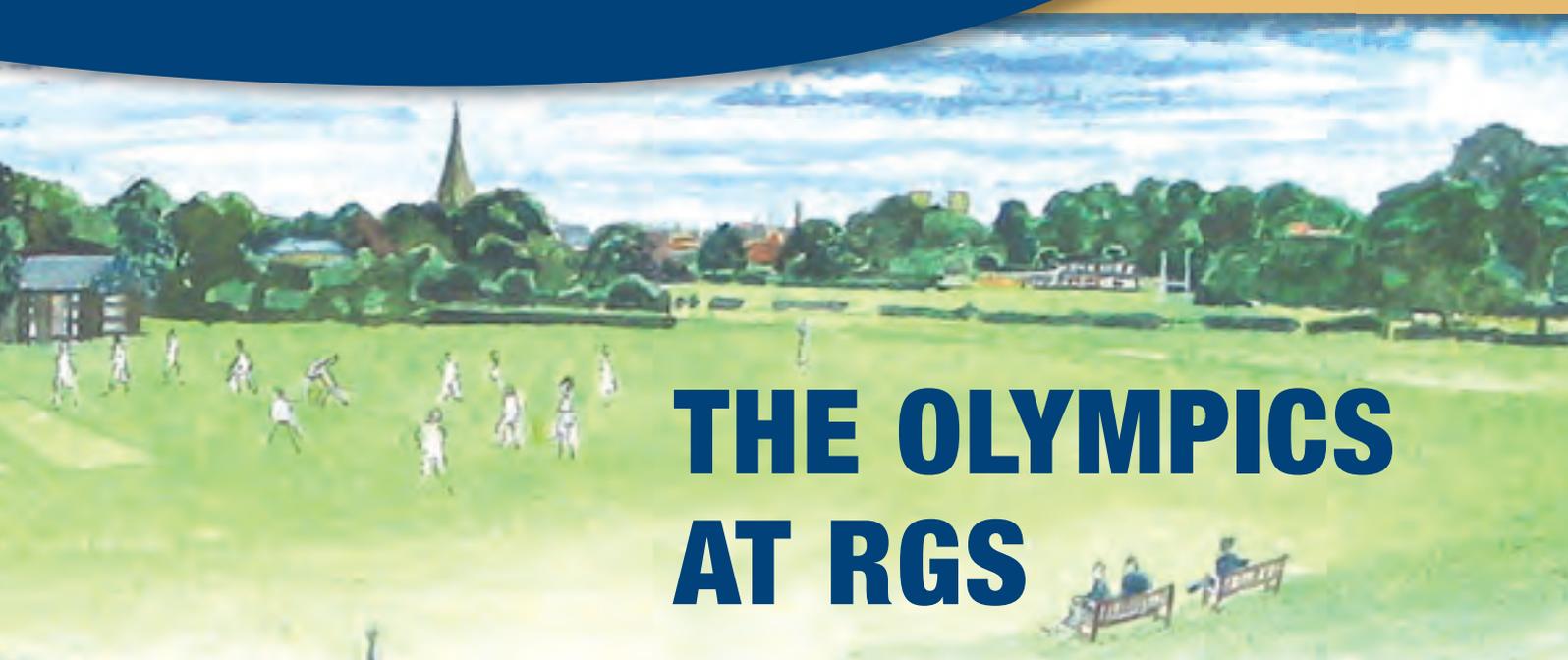


# RGS news

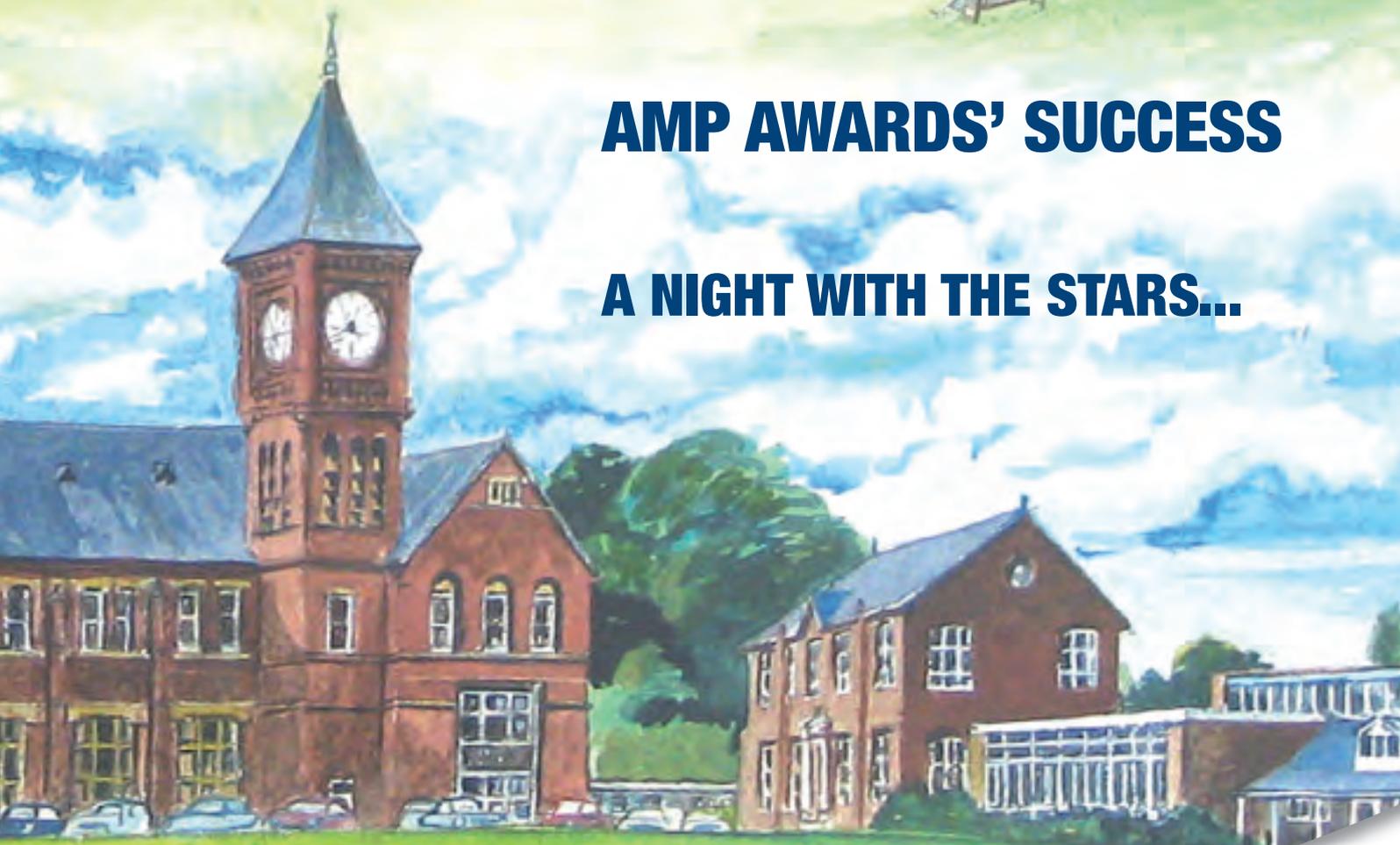
Issue 32 Spring 2012



## THE OLYMPICS AT RGS

## AMP AWARDS' SUCCESS

## A NIGHT WITH THE STARS...



*From a painting by Tony Smith, head of art at RGS, as a gift to the late Bill Petchey, head of history, on his retirement in 1995*



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# WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER

## Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Spring edition of the RGS News and I hope you will enjoy reading about the many events which have taken place over the last term. I am delighted with the outcome from Ofsted and, after the euphoria of being graded outstanding, I am pleased to say it is now back down to work. There is great satisfaction with the outcome and I would like to thank the many parents who took the trouble to write in to congratulate myself and the staff here. A post-Ofsted action plan is being formulated.

The school has enjoyed other notable successes in the recent months with victory in the Prince's Trust competition with the school team winning the Yorkshire round, the under-15 girls' hockey team are area champions, the KS3 badminton team are Harrogate champions and the First 15 rugby team won the Queen Ethelburga's sevens tournament.

The careers evening proved to be immensely popular with a very large number of students attending. There were over one hundred companies represented and it gave a real focus on careers for our students. Mrs Wilson did an excellent job in organising this event which runs biennially.

There have been a number of staff appointments made this term and further details will follow in due course. I am delighted with the quality of the fields the school is attracting and there is no doubt that some very talented staff have been appointed for September 2012.

Module results for January examinations were issued in March and showed that students are in a strong position to secure high grades at AS and A2. Some module results for GCSE students in physics and chemistry were also issued and it is clear that there is a very demanding time ahead for fifth and sixth form students in the coming months as they prepare for external examinations. Our best wishes go to them as they prepare for the very important challenges ahead.

My thanks to the editorial team for producing this issue of the RGS News, and my very best wishes to you for an enjoyable and happy Easter.

Yours sincerely



**M L Pearman (Headmaster)**

# THE OLYMPICS AT RGS!

## IT'S NEARLY HERE!



*Hannah Hale and Hannah Hickingbotham preparing to introduce the assembly*

Since 2005, when it was announced that Britain is to host the 2012 Olympics, we have been making appropriate preparations for the event. I am sure that almost everyone is aware that the Olympics will be gracing our television screens this summer and those who are not amongst the lucky few who were able to get tickets will be supporting the world-wide event from their living rooms. However, Ripon Grammar School has thought of a more active way to welcome our millions of visitors and become involved in this year's Olympics, especially considering we have our own Olympian in diver Jack Laugher in the lower-sixth.

A few weeks ago Mr Fell held an Olympic-themed assembly in which he reminded us of some of the most memorable and emotional moments; from gold medal winners such as Jesse Owens who, in the 1936 Olympics held in Berlin in Nazi Germany, won four gold medals, to those who, through sheer determination, made it past the finish line even though their bodies had collapsed in sheer exhaustion.

Mr Fell finished the assembly by asking each form captain or a representative from each form to draw the name of a country out of a hat. There were different reactions from different forms: cheers from some and whispers of "where's that?" from others. Once all the countries were drawn it was up to each form to carry out research into the geography, history, cuisine and culture of their respective country, decorate their form room and present their findings in whichever way they decided - from assemblies to buns with the flag iced on top!

## GET INVOLVED!

Most of the forms are currently getting to know their country and drawing together their ideas. However, we were all impressed to see L6C begin the long line of assemblies with their view of Papua New Guinea. It began with the innovative idea of handing out Haribo "people" (representing the fact that cannibalism was legal in Papua New Guinea until it was formally banned in the 1950s) which I am sure was appreciated by all! For those who were not able to attend the well-presented assembly here are a few of the most memorable facts:

- ▶ Papua New Guinea's capital and largest city is Port Moresby.
- ▶ The country's population is 5,670,544
- ▶ There are 800 different languages the most prominent being English and Hiri Motu, and the main religion is Christianity.
- ▶ The Asmats were one of the last tribes known to be engaging in cannibalism.

This assembly set the bar high for other forms and we hope to be as well informed about other cultures as we are about Papua New Guinea. So, in preparation for the Olympics, get involved and think about a range of different ideas to make your assembly as memorable as possible - and maybe the giving of sweets at the beginning of assembly will become a school tradition!

**Frankie Baldwin, L6D**



*Jacob Lockwood, Ollie Baldwin and Chris Bucktrout informing us of the cannibalistic nature of the country*

# BONJOUR LES DEUX ALPES!

For the first time ever at Ripon Grammar School, a group of 45 students ranging from the second to fourth year picked up their skis and headed off to the ski resort of Les Deux Alpes in the south of France with members of staff for a fun-filled week of skiing. The group left chilly England on the afternoon of 10 February and arrived at the ski resort late the following evening.

*'It was the best trip I've ever been on. From not knowing how to ski at all to becoming a confident skier was a great challenge and I wish I could go again'* Sophie Charlton 4A

The group spent each morning together, receiving skiing lessons from friendly, enthusiastic French locals. In the afternoon, the group was divided into beginners, intermediates and advanced skiers and then hit the slopes. After each full day in the sun, perfecting their skiing technique, the groups joined together in the evening for a hearty meal before each evening's activities. These included swimming in the outdoor pool, bowling and much, much more.

Each day a red hoody was worn by the skier of the day, and two fluorescent hoodies were worn by the skier with the best fall of the day and the skier with the most memorable quote of the day. Throughout the week the quality of the skiing increased rapidly, as did the quality of the quotes and the hilarity of the falls.



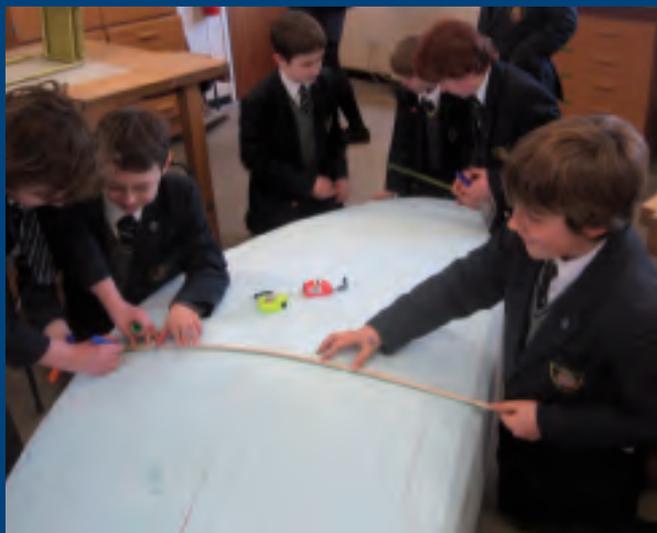
Joe Lewis was named skier of the week and Nicole Jackson provided the quote of the week. Tim Pope won the competition for the best fall of the week after an unfortunate entanglement with a ski lift and some French locals.

*'We all had such an enjoyable time with the best instructors possible. Plans for next year's trip have already started!'* Miss Raymer

On the final day the group said a sad goodbye to Les Deux Alpes before joining the coach to return to England. The trip was a great success with students and teachers expressing how much they enjoyed the entire experience.

Katherine May, L6F

# RGS GREENPOWER ELECTRIC CAR CLUB



A group of budding young designers at work on the latest Greenpower Car

## RGS GREENPOWER DISPLAY AT THE INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT MEMWITH HILL AIRBASE

The Greenpower Club have also been invited to attend the Independence Day celebrations at the Menwith Hill Airbase on Saturday 30th June. A group of American Girl Scouts are currently building gravity racers and heard about our Greenpower cars. We aim to display our electric cars on the day and hopefully test them around the base's smooth tarmac roads. This could be a good opportunity for our drivers to practise before the Northern Heat at the Croft Motor Circuit the following week.

## OLYMPIC CELEBRATION INVOLVEMENT

The RGS Greenpower Club are currently thinking of ways to use our electric cars in the school's build up to the celebrations of the Olympic Games this summer. Please let Mr Mann know if you have any great ideas!

Mr S Mann

# RHEANNA QUINN'S HENS

I have been breeding and showing champion show hens, with my mum, for many years now. Last November, the Poultry Club of Great Britain had its annual national show at Stoneleigh. This show attracts the best poultry in Britain and there are usually over 6,000 entries to the competition; it attracts worldwide interest.

Though I was not able to attend the show myself, my best show hens were shown at the 'Nationals', as they are known. To my great pleasure, my five hens were awarded 4 first prizes and 1 second prize.

This is a great achievement for me, as I had bred and reared the hens from chicks to adult hens since March last year.



Breeding and rearing show hens is such a rewarding hobby and to see the birds grow into a 'National' championship standard from a day old chick is a joy; I hope to continue with my hobby for many years to come.

Rheanna Quinn, 3D

# 'TAKE NOTE!' GET NOTICED....

**Congratulations to the 'Take Note!' enterprise team who represented RGS at the Yorkshire final of the Prince's Trust School Challenge, held at The Mount School in York on Thursday 1st March, where they competed against teams from Wakefield Girls', Bradford Grammar and The Mount.**

The team had to cope with some complex logistics on the day with four team members having to arrive in York straight from a Biology trip to Chester Zoo where they'd been earlier in the day. However, despite their last minute arrival, the team gave a polished presentation detailing their twelve-week challenge. The presentation explained how the team managed to raise over £600 for the Prince's Trust charity by designing and selling cotton bags, offering personalised polo shirts to RGS students and recycling mobile phones.

The team extend their thanks to Wolseley UK for their generous sponsorship of the printing of the bags, to Mr Marshall their business advisor and to all of the students and parents for supporting this enterprise.

The evening concluded with 'Take Note!' being declared the winners!

Thanks go to Toby Kinread for his fantastic bag design and unstinting efforts in producing the materials for the final presentation. Well done to all team members for their hard work in raising money for such a worthwhile charity!

Teresa Thornton, L6B



# Parents' Association

## NEWS FROM THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Parents' Association got off to a good start in the New Year with a very enjoyable Burns' Night on 21st January which raised a fantastic sum of just over £1600. About ninety people supped on haggis, neeps and tatties and danced the night away to the ceilidh band Cobblers Jig.

Our next venture was to hold three astronomy evenings during January, February and March. Unfortunately two out of the three planned evenings initially had to be cancelled because of cloudy skies, but eventually were reconvened on clearer nights. Mr Barker, a physics teacher, and a very helpful group of his astronomy students, gave a total of seventy-five people an extremely interesting and informative evening which included an illustrated talk and a chance to enter the school observatory and see the moon, Mars, Jupiter and Venus through the telescope. The Parents' Association are very grateful to Mr Barker and the students for giving up their spare time for this, and in total we raised approximately £450 towards funds by running these evenings.

Our tea/coffee stalls at parents' evenings and other events such as drama evenings are becoming a familiar and welcome sight to many of you by now. We have recently experimented with offering ground cafetière coffee in place of instant coffee and this has proved very popular, as well as more lucrative for RGSPA funds! We have now decided to use only Fair Trade coffee on our stalls, and also to try to provide home made cakes. Please come and visit us at the next event you attend at school, and sample our food and drink!

If you would like to join the Parents' Association, or offer to help at events without necessarily being on the committee, we are always pleased to see new faces and hear some fresh ideas! We are a friendly and sociable group of parents, and it is an excellent way to meet other parents of different year groups. Please email us at [parentsassociation@ripongrammar.co.uk](mailto:parentsassociation@ripongrammar.co.uk) or make contact with RGSPA via the school office. We now have a list of volunteers who are unable to attend meetings but can offer help in baking cakes or helping to serve drinks at parents' evenings. If you think this is 'you', then we would be delighted to hear from you further.

Since December, funds raised have gone towards a wheelchair to be kept in school for use when needed, girls' football club equipment for training, a new software package for GCSE food and nutrition, tents and stoves for Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, a microwave for the sixth-form block, paint to decorate the common room in the sixth form, new tyres for the Greenpower car and a digital camera for the ICT department.

Please look out for three RGSPA events coming very soon: We are holding a cake stall on Ripon Market on Saturday 5th May, so will be asking for your help to bake cakes for that in due course!

Our next fund raiser is Comedy and Curry Night at Bishop Monkton Village Hall on Saturday 28th April 7.30 pm. There will be a bar available and we have two comedy acts booked: Iszi Lawrence and the Scottish Falsetto Sock Puppets. Both have performed at the Edinburgh Fringe in recent years. This is going to be an excellent evening. Tickets are £18 from the school office. (Please note this evening will be adult humour only).

There are thousands of pounds worth of fabulous prizes to be won in our 'Olympic Spirit' Grand Summer Draw, which will be launched soon after Easter. This will help to raise money to improve school sports facilities and nurture our young sporting talent. You could win a T-shirt signed by members of the GB Diving Team, including Tom Daley and Ripon's own Olympic hopeful, RGS pupil Jack Laugher. Added to this, Harrogate's Nuffield health club is offering a year's free membership, worth £744, with full use of its swimming pool, sauna, steam room and jacuzzi, as well as state-of-the-art gym. Other prizes which you can enjoy, or give as a special gift to friends or family, include tennis lessons, hi-tech sports gear, a football stadium tour, rugby and football match tickets, a sports massage, physiotherapy session, Zumba dance fitness lessons, a day at Thirsk Races for four, F1 Kart racing sessions, personal fitness training session, further gym memberships, bike service and shop vouchers, Thai boxing lessons, an original Leeds United FC signed team photo and use of a sports hall or Astro turf pitch to host your own game. We are also holding a Silent Auction for horse lovers. You can bid for a riding lesson with top Olympic coach Christopher Bartle and a free horse vetting - worth £250 - by an experienced equine vet.

All existing parents will be sent some raffle tickets to sell (£1 each) soon after Easter. Please leave all Silent Auction bids for the equine lots, including contact details, in sealed envelopes with the School Office, marked 'FAO RGSPA'.

And finally, the Parents' Association would like to wish a very happy retirement to Mrs Wakefield, school receptionist. She has done a huge amount to help the Parents' Association over the years, in particular by selling tickets for our events, but also by doing hundreds of other tasks we have set her, always with complete enthusiasm, efficiency and willingness! Our huge thanks go to her and we wish her all the best for the future-she will be very much missed.

*Jane Robinson, Chair RGSPA*

## FUNDRAISING

### SCHOOL GENERAL FUND

Ripon Grammar School General Fund is a registered charity and funds raised are used to support a host of projects to support individual students, group and whole-school activities. To date the fund has been used to:

- Finance transport costs associated with school outings, games and sports fixtures which amount to approximate £10,000 per year.
- It subsidises the cost of mounting various school plays, concerts and musicals.
- It subsidises the cost of the annual speech day, lower school prize giving, plus the carol service and the commemoration service, both of which are held in Ripon Cathedral.
- It enables the various clubs and societies in school to continue to flourish, and it has provided science equipment, library furniture and sports kit.

The General School Fund will be re-launched soon to encourage every parent or guardian to give an affordable sum of money on a regular monthly basis.



### FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY REUNION

The search is on to trace former students who attended Ripon Girls' High School in the 1960s.

Ripon Grammar School, together with the Old Riponians, wants to invite all former students to visit the school on the afternoon of Saturday 14th July 2012 to share their memories with staff and students. One, who has already contacted the Old Riponians' Association after surfing the net hoping to contact old friends from the High School, is Bess Fai, (formerly Westwick). Bess was at the High School from 1935 to 1940, and having married a Canadian airman now lives in British Columbia. She is keen to hear from anyone who remembers her.

The school's history can be traced back as far as the seventh century and in 2005 it celebrated its 450th anniversary since its refounding in 1555. Next year the school will be celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the merging of Ripon Girls' High School with Ripon Grammar School in 1962, and to mark the occasion, school is calling on former students to search their attics and dig out old photographs and memorabilia from this time.

Headmaster, Martin Pearman, said: "Ripon Grammar School is one of the oldest schools in the country and with a long and proud history. We are looking to re-acquaint ourselves as a school with former students across the generations at a special event in July and to mark the 50th anniversary, we are hoping to mount a photographic exhibition and feature some case studies of memories at school during 1962".

If you think you might be able to help, or you know someone who attended school in 1962, please contact Jackie Dawson on 01765 602647 x392 or email [dawsonj@ripongrammar.co.uk](mailto:dawsonj@ripongrammar.co.uk)

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES TRIP TO MANCHESTER



In March sixth-form students who are studying religious studies went on a cultural trip, with a focus on Buddhism, to Manchester. The idea of the trip was to allow us to see and understand the Buddhist way of life at first hand.

Thus, on the Friday, we spent the day at the Buddhist centre. The calm and relaxing atmosphere hit us as we walked through the door and we found ourselves in an open-plan, minimalistic reception area. The day then progressed through the practice of meditation, discussions and quizzing the Buddhists who worked there about their beliefs and how they came to be Buddhists in a western society.



The Saturday of the trip brought us to a Chinese Buddhist Temple, where we had a talk and tour from one of the nuns. She talked us through the main concepts of Buddhism and what they mean to her, including the idea of walking meditation, where each step means something in your life.

In the afternoon we visited the Lowry and the Imperial War Museums. The Imperial War museum itself was disorientating with several different ways to explore the building. There was a change in slope throughout and also a change in temperature at different points in the room.

Thus the trip was insightful, helpful and enjoyed by all who went.

Emily Bowes, L6B



As part of the upper-sixth A-level course 'Love Through the Ages', the English department, and the Theatre Studies department organised a trip to the Theatre Royal in Newcastle to see Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. The group set off on a mini bus to the theatre shortly after break, arriving early so the group could spend half an hour exploring the city of Newcastle.

We then took our seats in the beautifully crafted upper circle of the theatre; the safety curtain rose to reveal a set which resembled a 30ft bed. For those who have never read or seen the play, it begins with the drunkard Christopher Sly being thrown out of his local tavern for running up an enormous bar tab which he cannot pay. He is then found asleep by the Lord of the Manor who decides to play a practical joke on Sly, putting on the play *The Taming of the Shrew* to keep him occupied.

**'I had not previously studied the play and was anxious about seeing the play, however I found it extremely funny and would definitely recommend it'.** Sophie Charlton 4A

The main body of the play concerns an unruly young woman called Kate who refuses to conform to the expectations of the contemporary woman. Her father thus decides that Kate's young beautiful sister Bianca cannot marry until Kate has also married, causing a huge dilemma for Bianca who has numerous prospective, wealthy suitors. This results in a dramatic play filled with laughs and scandal – including an overweight middle-aged man running around with no underwear on at regular intervals throughout the play.

**'Taming of the Shrew surpassed all my expectations and suited my interpretation of the text very well. Provocative and anarchic; what's not to love?'** Billy Holdsworth, L6E

The journey home was filled with much discussion about the quality of the acting and the unique interpretation The Royal Shakespeare company employed.

Credit must be given to the actor David Cave for his outstanding performance as Petruchio in which he captivated the attention of the audience throughout. There was much praise by everyone and we would highly recommend it due to the high calibre of the acting and its entertaining nature.

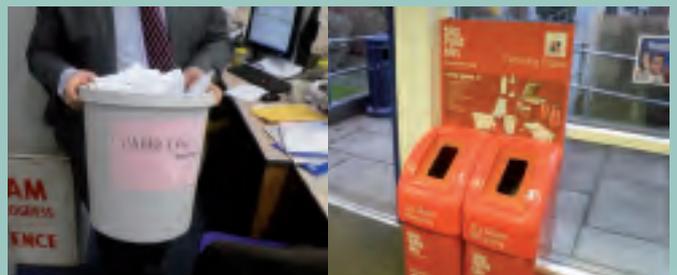
*We would highly recommend taking the time to watch it as the RSC tours Britain; however if you would like to see a more modern interpretation of the Taming of the Shrew we would advise the feel-good romantic comedy "10 Things I Hate About You".*

Katherine May, L6F and Frankie Baldwin, L6D

## SCHOOL COUNCIL

A lack of space in the antecedent edition meant we were unable to introduce our new School Councillors. School Councillors are elected on an annual basis, with each councillor serving for two years. Each year group has two representatives on the Council, whom any member of a year group is able to approach with an idea about improving the school. Successful candidates this year (in ascending order or age) were: Cobey Cutmore, Euan Clyde, Olivia Walker, Matthew Cotton, Bently Briggs, Sam McCoubrey, Elizabeth Tearle, Jacob Eves and Lauren Hudson. They join the current incumbents, along with the present Head Boy and Girl. The Council has, as always, an exciting set of projects this year, overseen by the watchful eyes of Mr Auger and Mrs Wright. Sub-committees this year are working on projects as diverse as catering and the structures of the school. In particular, the Council has been asked by the Senior Leadership Team to look at Health and Safety in and around the school from the point of view of the students. Beyond this, the Council will continue to work in tandem with the sixth form committee on the issue of Fairtrade. The Council achieved a lot last year, and it is hoped that this progress will be replicated this year.

## RECYCLING



Perhaps the greatest progress the Council made last year was in the area of recycling. The school now has two schemes in place: the Biffa big red bin scheme and a separate Harrogate Borough Council paper scheme. Paper recycling bins are present in all classrooms, and student involvement is augmented by nominated members of the form emptying the bins. Visitors are quick to spot the large Biffa bins, positioned at strategic locations around the school. Any waste, be it paper, plastic or metal, can be placed into the bins, and all of it gets recycled. The significant reduction in the waste sent to land fill is a credit to the school and is also a testament to the enthusiastic way students have embraced the scheme. There is potential to increase the number of Biffa red bins, and there are plans to make recycling and the environment a key part of lower school citizen lessons. There has also been an emphasis on encouraging students to cut down on the amount of waste they produce, as recycling is by no means a perfect solution. The words on everyone's lips are 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!'

Hugh McHale-Maughan, L6F



# SPORTS NEWS

## BADMINTON SUCCESS



On 29 February a KS4 team of boys and girls visited York to compete in the Centre Parks School Badminton Competition. This was the North Yorkshire round of the competition, and the winning team would go on to play in the Yorkshire round. The boys' team, comprising Matthew Clare, George Robinson, Bryn May and Josh Stockdale, played against nine other schools and came a triumphant second place losing narrowly to the winners, three games to two.



The girls' team, comprising Zara Cotton, Jenny Rowe, Jess Bryden and Sally Ingram, successfully won the girls' tournament with little competition – not one school managed to take a game off the team. The girls now go on to compete in the next round of the competition against the winners from other schools across Yorkshire. We wish them all the best of luck for the next round.

*Zara Cotton, 5B*

## RIPON GRAMMAR EQUESTRIAN TEAM



At Ripon Grammar School we are extremely lucky to have an Equestrian Team run by Miss Murray. There are monthly training sessions on Friday evenings at the Northallerton Equestrian Centre, by kind permission of Mrs Walker. The training sessions attract a large range of horse riders of mixed ability ranging from first to sixth form. All students are

welcome, regardless of whether they are competitive or not, as the emphasis is on having fun no matter what level you have reached.

Last year the first-year riders did exceedingly well winning some inter-school show-jumping competitions. The team recently came fifth in a dressage competition at Queen Ethelburga's, marking a promising start to the competition season! New members are always welcome. The date of the next training session has yet to be confirmed.

*Huguette Craggs, L6C  
Team Captain*

## GOING FOR GOLD

Jack Laugher recently competed in the diving World Cup at the London Aquatic Centre. Not only did he get a taste of the Olympic pool but he also achieved a personal best in the preliminary round; which ensured he qualified for the finals. He continued with his fantastic competition and ended up finishing 8th with a score of 463.70. His best dive of the competition was a reverse 3.5 somersaults in tuck for which he scored a series of nines and a ten giving him an incredible score of 94.5 points for that dive alone.



For the next few months Jack's timetable continues to fill up with various events. He is travelling to Dubai and to China for the diving World Series in March, then in April he is going to Russia and Mexico and finally in May he will be in Eindhoven for the European Championships. We wish him the best of luck for all these future competitions!

*Hannah Hickingbotham, L6C*

## U15 GIRLS' HOCKEY

On February 27th the U15 girls' hockey team hosted the first hockey tournament on the new Astroturf. With the weather conditions against us and the knowledge that we were going to be playing some extremely strong teams, we had to work together to maintain team spirit and keep the determination levels high.

We played some very competitive and dynamic matches, giving each player the opportunity to excel in their position. Charlotte Clayton made some excellent saves throughout the afternoon, not letting in a single goal. The defence worked extremely well and managed to clear the ball many times, the midfield players managed to take the ball up to the attacking 'D' where the forwards were able to score. Unfortunately, Melody Swiers was unable to play due to an injury sustained in a previous match; however Anna Durkin and Holly Oldham were willing to step-up and play for the year above.

**THE FINAL SCORES WERE:** Ripon - St. Aidans 1-0   Ripon - King James 5-0  
Ripon - Rossett 0-0   Ripon - Ashville 1-0

We were delighted to be awarded the title of U15 Area Champions joining the U16 and U14 who have achieved that accolade already.

**TEAM LIST:** Zoe Umpleby, Francesca Boyce, Kerry McCormack, Sophie Veitch, Sophie John, Nicola Terry, Olivia Howatson-Kerr, Juliet Fenlon, Victoria Luty, Kimberley Hagues, Charlotte Clayton, Anna Durkin, Holly Oldham and Esther Walpole(Captain).

## ASTROTURF UPDATE

The new Astroturf pitch has been a huge success. It has been used for a wide range of sports including girls' hockey, boys' hockey and football. It has been an excellent addition to the school as it has enabled these sports to be practised whatever the weather and allowed students to get a feel for the different surface in their lessons.

The school has already seen a positive outcome of the installation of the Astroturf as the under 16 and under 15 girls' hockey teams both recently won the area tournament for their age group. These were tournaments involving local secondary schools. We now look forward to the results of the hockey teams in the younger age groups at tournaments scheduled for later in the school year.

Not only has the Astroturf benefited the school teams, but it has also made a huge difference in PE lessons and enrichment activities for the sixth form. It has given the opportunity for some of the sixth-form boys to play football on Wednesday afternoons on an even and clean pitch. It has also made hockey lessons more enjoyable as the game can move a lot faster as the players no longer have to avoid the dips and holes of the old grass pitches.

*Hannah Hickingbotham, L6C*

# THE amp awards

The double page spread in the Ripon Gazette may already have revealed the success Ripon Grammar School has enjoyed in the 'Amp Awards'. An annual music competition, the awards have been running for 4 years and are immensely popular.

This year, the school entered two bands, and, while Summer City gave a great performance, it was Purple Mafia who stole the show and ended up victorious. The band, consisting of fourth-years Tom Stringer, Harry Yates, Toby Hussey and Josh Stockdale, and led by fifth-year Dan Reynard on vocals, were thrilled at the victory. Josh commented: "It really shows all our hard work and effort has paid off. We knew if we played our best and got a good crowd reaction with people jumping around and singing along, we stood a good chance."

Obviously, the whole school is very proud of the band, who have gone from strength to strength over the last twelve months.



*"It really shows all our hard work and effort has paid off. We knew if we played our best and got a good crowd reaction with people jumping around and singing along, we stood a good chance."*

Their single 'She thinks it' has proved to be a real breakthrough for them, and the band can look forward to continued success and next year's Amp Awards.



The Amp Awards also allowed an opportunity for sixth-form students to get involved in the business and marketing side of the event. Amy Barton and Ellie Wilson took full advantage of this as part of the 'Decibel' team, and are very grateful to Mrs Southwell for the opportunity. The team did exceptionally well, securing a breakfast promotion spot for Purple Mafia on Chris Evans' Radio 2 show. Well done to all involved.

*Hugh McHale-Maughan, L6F*

# MUSICALITY LONDON TRIP

The musicality trip was, well what can we say?

**First thing on Friday morning, we embarked on the long, arduous journey to London! We clambered up to our rooms on the eighth, ninth and tenth floors of our hotel with our very 'small' suitcases!**

After unpacking we went down to the reception and waited for the others to arrive. We then made our way down to the centre of London where we had dinner at The Fire and Stone, where we ate lots of pizza and had ice cream for dessert. After a lovely meal, we trekked down to the Theatre Royal on Drury Lane to watch 'Shrek the Musical' It was immense! The musical was thoroughly enjoyable and we particularly liked the dragon that cost £300,000 and very funny Lord Farquaad who wasn't a dwarf but a man shuffling along on his knees with fake legs!

Saturday morning started early with breakfast at 7am. After much moaning and yawning, we made it down to breakfast and gorged ourselves on food before leaving at 9.30am to go to the Pineapple Dance Studios. After searching and searching for Louis Spence, we figured that he must have been too busy filming Dancing on Ice! We were met by Mike, a West End Musical Director, who taught us a song from Shrek and we performed it with various actions! We also had a 'Q&A' with an actor from Shrek the Musical; she played one of the blind mice and the ugly duckling. She was very nice and we learned what it was like to be a performer in a West End musical.



After a visit to Covent Garden for lunch and shopping it was time for the Natural History Museum. We all thoroughly enjoyed looking at the pickled animals in the Darwin exhibition and the enormous Blue whale!

On Saturday evening, dinner at Tiger Tiger and a trip to M & M World, where we bought brightly coloured and very expensive chocolate, was the perfect preparation for an evening at the Piccadilly Theatre where we watched, "Ghost the Musical". Ghost was an amazing experience, not something that anyone would forget in a hurry. It had everyone, Mr Colley included, in tears! After a late night finish we walked to the coach through the very packed Saturday night streets of London! We returned to the hotel to find it packed with lots of Liverpool and Cardiff football fans there for the Carling Cup Final the next day. The next morning, after breakfast, our cases packed, we lumbered on to the coach and set off for the Westfield Shopping Centre. Westfield was a blur. We had only two hours. After spending all our money we met up with Mr Colley, Miss Jackson and Mrs Fell to get back on the coach! What a great weekend!

*Maria Scullion and Rheanna Quinn, 3D*

# MUSIC BLOCK UPDATE

The major construction project in school this year is the new Music block. The project has allowed students interested in architecture or engineering careers the chance to follow the progress. Stephen Laws in the Lower-Sixth commented: "With the new music block well under way students were offered the opportunity to get some on site experience."

There have been various problems with the new music block, because of the gypsum deposits situated around the school. It was eventually decided that the new music block would be situated by the Language Huts near the allotments.

The students following the project have seen the foundations being laid in the ground, requiring eight lorry loads of cement. The students will next go on site when the steel frame has been fully erected and there will be a much clearer sense of the appearance of the music block.

Following that the students will visit the site frequently to see how it is progressing and how the engineers and designers overcome some of the obstacles that may arise, as well as some of the more subtle design aspects such as the floating floor which actually reduces the amount of sound lost from the music rooms and is often used in sound studios and cinemas.

The music block will be yet another fantastic addition to the school premises. It will provide the music students with much improved facilities in which to develop their music skills as well as providing a great place for band practice and other musical activities."

# MUSIC AWARDS

Music awards took place on Monday 30th January 2012. The classes were very full providing healthy competition within each year group. The evening was very enjoyable with some outstanding performances. Local Musical Director and Conductor of the Ripon City Band, Malcolm Dibb provided some excellent adjudication and made some very difficult decisions to come up with the following list of winners.

<b>1ST YEAR</b>	Kirsty Arrowsmith (singing)
<b>2ND YEAR</b>	Imogen Morgan (piano)
<b>3RD YEAR</b>	Maria Scullion (flute)
<b>4TH YEAR</b>	Jessica Bryden (piano/cello)
<b>5TH YEAR</b>	Sarah Owens (cornet)
<b>6TH FORM</b>	Cameron McCormack (alto sax)
<b>OVERALL WINNER</b>	Jessica Bryden (piano/cello)
<b>MOST IMPROVED</b>	Alec Cavell-Taylor (trombone) & Matthew Smith (alto sax)
<b>BEST TURNED OUT</b>	Lucie Algret (flute)

We look forward to next year's music awards!

*Miss Jackson*

# MAKE TIME TO READ AT RGS

Already keen readers, RGS students made even more time to read from 27 February to 6 March 2012. In celebration of World Book Day on 1 March the Library ran a series of activities to promote reading for pleasure.

First, second and third year students all had the opportunity to watch a visiting author give a talk about writing and their work and purchase a signed copy of their books. In addition, some students were able to take part in creative-writing workshops.

Little Ripon Bookshop provided a superb Book Fair where pupils could browse the titles and order copies, using their World Book Day tokens for a £1 discount.

There were several competitions; guess the staff members' favourite childhood reads; design your library of the future; write a poem about 'time' or complete the time-themed, literary quiz.

Questions were dotted around school and if pupils could find them and answer the question they received a prize of a book biscuit. A house competition saw students earning 'Make Time to Read' vouchers and house points by reading quietly around school.

All in all, a Good Time was Read by all!

*Emily Bowes, LGB*



*Book Fair at Little Ripon Book Shop*

# ON BROADWAY

On 9 and 10 February students from a variety of year groups participated in 'On Broadway', two evenings of performances from some of the greatest musicals of recent years from a range of different genres. The audience was seated around tables throughout the hall while the performances took place, providing a sociable, relaxed and informal atmosphere for them to enjoy the night's offerings. The cabaret-styled production featured both the lower and upper schools individually presenting a selection of songs from some of the most famous musicals such as Hairspray, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, The Lion King, Fame, Miss Saigon and Wicked.

Audiences were treated to a mixture of big chorus numbers and solo performances. Musical highlights included 'One Short Day' from Wicked, 'The Circle of Life' & 'Hakuna Matata' from The Lion King, and 'Welcome to the 60s' and 'You Can't Stop the Beat' from Hairspray.

Alongside the performers, a small band of school students and music-teaching staff supported the cast well.

On behalf of the cast, I would like to thank Miss Jackson and Mr Lancaster, together with the many other members of staff who contributed, for all their hard work in ensuring that the production was a success and we hope that everyone who came enjoyed watching it as much as we enjoyed putting it on!

# RGS CAREERS' EVENING

On Thursday 8 March nearly 100 organisations from a wide range of employment sectors took part in our very popular careers evening. It was a delight to step back and observe the many enthusiastic conversations taking place between students of all ages and representatives from businesses and universities.

A message of thanks to the many people involved in the evening is on the school website.

*Mrs F Wilson, Careers Department*





# OLD RIPONIANS' ASSOCIATION

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

## A FAMILY AT WAR BY DESMOND KELLY, SON OF NORMAN KELLY (RGS 1917-1923)



**Norman Kelly, Head Boy, captain of rugby, cricket and hockey left RGS for Cambridge as a Crabtree Exhibitioner in 1923. He read History and Law at St. Catherine's College. He met my mother, one of a family of eight, from a farm in Northern Ireland, while he was still an undergraduate.**

In 1927, he went to Burma in the Frontier Service but was forbidden to marry as he was a Probationer. Loilem, in the Shan States, where he was stationed, was known as a one-man station.

Norman was the only white man there and it must have been a major culture shock for my mother arriving after their marriage. My sister, Maeve, and I were born there.

Norman was chosen to work in the Wa States with the accomplished head-hunters, who coveted the heads of foreigners. He did particularly well and was awarded the OBE by the Governor of Burma in 1938.

In 1939, war with Germany was declared and Norman was transferred to Tiddim in the Chin Hills, near the border with India. We thought the war could not reach us in such a remote part of the Empire. How wrong we were!

On Christmas Day, 1941, the Japanese began bombing Rangoon, the capital of Burma. Thousands died, amidst dismay and terror. By 1942, the Japanese, intending to invade India, were unstoppable. The British Army, led by General Alexander, were retreating. In April 1942, my sister and I saw a plane flying over Tiddim, and, thinking it was a Spitfire, we waved, but, to our horror, we realised it was a Japanese plane, perhaps heading towards Tiddim. We knew they were heading our way!

Part of Norman's job was to rally the resistance, so he gathered the chiefs, headmen and elders. He told them, "I have been with you for three years and for the first time in history, you have lived free from fear and want.

The Japanese will burn your villages, plunder your houses, rape your women, steal your crops and make you slaves. I will be your Military Commander, and I pledge to remain with you whatever happens, doing all I can in your best interests."

It took Norman three days to persuade the Chin Tribesmen to fight with the British. He supplied them with guns and ammunition, paid for by money left in the Kaleymo Bank by the retreating British Army. The aim was to show the rice merchants that the British were not finished, to get as much rice as possible into the hills and to blow up the road to Tiddim before the Japanese arrived.

On 5th May 1942, we heard that the Japanese were only 50 miles away. My mother was ordered to take us and to leave the next day to 'walk out' to India. It was heart rending to say goodbye to our father, but it was particularly hard for our mother, as she knew we might never see him again. The officer Norman sent to guard us on the journey soon became delirious with malaria and had to be carried. Our mother confiscated his pistol, sleeping with the money under her pillow. It took us nineteen days to walk through jungle and over rivers to reach the Bengal Assam Railway, which took us to Calcutta.

On 14th May, Norman met General Alexander at his HQ, which had been bombed the previous day, saying he would do all he could to keep the Japanese out of the Chin Hills. The Japanese put a price on his head.

In September 1942, he was charged with another Herculean task: to build a ninety mile road from Tiddim to the Indian border. It was vital and was eventually used to bring in food and later the seventeenth Indian Division. They held out till March 1944 when Field Marshall Slim made a fighting withdrawal to Imphal.

They marched out of Tiddim, leaving it in flames. Norman did not go with them, keeping his promise to stay with the Chins, come what may. He stayed behind Japanese lines for three months and they ordered him to be 'shot on sight.'

After battles at Imphal and Kohima had been won, the fifth Indian Division advanced down the Tiddim road, recapturing it. Major General Lyall Grant said of my father, "A most enterprising and courageous man, who at a critical time upheld to the full the high standards for which the British were once famous."

*(Mrs Kelly refused to leave Simla until her husband was with them, and the family was finally reunited in June 1945, returning to England together. Their part of the story and a more detailed account of Norman's activities in the war, is in Desmond Kelly's book, 'Kelly's Burma Campaign,' in the school library. It is mainly based on Norman Kelly's letters to his wife during the time the family was separated.)*

## NEWS

The ORA Christmas reunion was a great success, with a wider range of games than before and not a flake of snow!

The reunion to mark the 50th Anniversary of the amalgamation of Ripon Grammar School and the Girls' High School will be held from 2pm on the afternoon of Saturday, 14 July 2012.

## OBITUARY

### RICHARD KENT BAILEY -1958-2011

Richard died suddenly in October 2011. It was a great shock to all who knew and loved him. His wife, Marion (nee Livingston), and his son Keith are also Old Riponians. A more detailed obituary will appear in the next edition of 'The Clocktower.'





## IN MEMORY OF MEGAN BELL WALKER

Despite her short time in the first year at the school, our entire community felt the loss of Megan Bell Walker. Megan's term in the first year meant she became a familiar figure to staff and pupils alike, and her attitude impressed everyone who came into contact with her. Any cancer is a tragedy, but for it to affect someone so young is an unimaginable hardship. As such, there was a feeling throughout the school that some action, as well as a tribute to Megan, was necessary. A chair is being commissioned by 'Mousey Thompson' for the School Library as a memorial for Megan. Not only will this chair be a fitting and lasting tribute, but it will also allow Megan's friends a special and peaceful place to go and think about her. The school will also be fundraising for the charity 'Candlelighters'. This charity deals with teenage and child cancer within Yorkshire, by providing facilities and support for the affected parties. It is not only particularly pertinent, but is also the Bell Walker family's preference. Fundraising kicked off with a non-uniform day on Thursday, 23rd February which raised £1,411.75 and the effort will continue to be pursued through the Lower School Office.

*Zara Cotton, 5B*

## GOODBYE MRS WAKEFIELD



Mrs Wakefield is known to all parents and students at Ripon Grammar School as she has been our school receptionist for thirteen years. Before coming to work for us however she was a parent, with three of her four daughters attending Ripon Grammar School, so she has had an association with the school for over twenty years. She has always been involved with the Parents' Association and has supported them by fundraising, attending functions and being the school's contact for

ticket sales, cakes, second hand uniform and much more! Mrs Wakefield was also Clerk to the Governors for several years, so she is very well known and respected amongst the Ripon community.

Mrs Wakefield must hold the school record for not having a day's absence during her time here. Even when she fell off her bicycle on an Outdoor Pursuits weekend with the school and broke her wrist she came into school on Monday morning and continued to type with one hand!

Part of Mrs Wakefield's job has been to look after students who are unwell and even though she has been subject to their germs she has never given in to illness herself! She has been a true stalwart and we shall all miss her gentle, professional and kind manner.

Now the time has come to retire from school, Mrs Wakefield will enjoy spending time with her five grandchildren (all under the age of four!), taking lots of holidays, studying Latin and botanical drawing, undertaking furniture restoration, as well as gardening, walking and cooking.

Mrs Wakefield has watched students grow from first-form students nervously finding their feet to more seasoned veterans in the sixth-form. She has, without fail, been a reassuring presence to the uncertain and unwell and has provided that vital link with parents, always with good heart and cheerfulness. Mrs Wakefield has, for many years, been the voice and face of Ripon Grammar School to parents, visitors and students and we wish her a long and happy retirement together with her husband, Stuart.

**Mrs Storey**  
Headmaster's secretary

# A NIGHT WITH THE STARS...

Forget red carpets and the Oscars, here at RGS, parents and students braved cold winter nights, rain and snow for an astronomical evening where they learned a little more about the wonder that is our universe. From planets to stars, asteroids to comets, our guests were treated to a presentation by Mr Barker followed by some star gazing and planet spotting down at the observatory. The mulled wine, hot chocolate and cakes to finish were thoroughly enjoyed in the warmth of the sixth-form centre whilst the students who helped on the night displayed excellent subject knowledge during a question-and-answer session afterwards. The British weather might not be an astronomer's best friend, but with patience and some good luck we hope our guests will be able to remember the constellation pointers in the sky to help them navigate the night sky. At this time of year look out for Venus, the brightest object in the night sky after the moon, and Jupiter, the second brightest object.

They can be found by tracing a line through the night sky following the path taken by the sun during the day.

*Sian Avery, L6C*

## PHOTO CHALLENGE:

Can you name the constellation in the centre of photo and spot Betelgeuse?



*Photo courtesy of Ben Widdowson L6C*

For further information please contact us:

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