

Keeping alumni in touch with Ripon Grammar School and each other

# Clocktower

Winter/Spring 2017 Issue 11



Teachers  
and former  
classmates  
recall the boy  
who grew  
up to be  
**BRITAIN'S  
GREATEST  
DIVER OF  
ALL TIME**

**JACK  
LAUGHER:**  
'The  
passion  
that  
drives  
me'

**The  
making  
of an  
Olympic  
champion**

Also inside: Miss Mac's Rio report, reunions, school news and more



## A letter from the Headmaster



Dear former students and friends of RGS,

Welcome to this issue of the Clocktower; another packed edition highlighting the fantastic achievements of students, both in school and after they have left. I am incredibly proud of what they are able to achieve whilst maintaining excellent standards in their academic studies.

Whilst it is invidious to single-out one individual, it would be difficult not to highlight Jack Laugher's achievements in the Olympics. To win two medals in the Rio Olympics is an exceptional achievement but what I believe is more important is how grounded, modest and unassuming Jack was whilst he was at school. He never sought the limelight and just let his success do the talking. It is clear that he showed tremendous resilience by overcoming injury setbacks as well as a disappointing London Olympics; RGS is tremendously proud of him.

I very much enjoyed being part of the recent reunions this summer and meeting many former RGS students for the first time who left in the 1960s. Their gratitude to and affection for Ripon Grammar School was palpable and, as Head, it was extremely humbling to realise what impact the school has had on their lives and how much they enjoyed their time here.

I look forward to monitoring the progress today's students will make once they leave school and I am sure there are many more success stories waiting to be written.

Despite announcing my retirement at the end of the year, the job remains as busy as ever. I am looking forward to reflecting on my 13 years at RGS in the next edition of the Clocktower.

Best wishes,  
Martin Pearman

# Where are they now?

Have you ever wondered what happened to those old friends you lost touch with? We find out what some former RGS students and staff are up to now



**Jane Barrett (Elliott)**  
(Left RGS 1987)

Despite my legs turning a mottled purple colour due to the cold, I loved hockey at school and was a protégée of the inspirational Barbara Holland.

Sadly my hockey skills declined when I got to the University of Reading to read land management and I only managed the Third XI.

My claim to fame is that I tried (unsuccessfully) to copy from Kath Viner's answers in history tests - she was very politically aware then and super clever so no surprise she's now editor of the Guardian.

I left at 16 to board at Repton School, as my parents divorced and my father moved to Hong Kong. Geography was my best subject so I decided to study land management.

After qualifying as a commercial property surveyor I decided I liked people more than buildings and so switched to recruitment to help people get jobs.

After essentially a sales job for a couple of years, I retrained as a career coach to try and help the people I had been trying to recruit. I worked for PricewaterhouseCoopers before setting up a career coaching business, working mainly with business schools in Europe.

The second edition of my book 'How to Take Charge of Your Career' will be published by Bloomsbury in January 2017. After stints in the US, Hong Kong and London I returned to Yorkshire with my husband and we now live in Harrogate with our son. I have very fond memories of RGS and still keep in close touch with several of my friends from those days - strong bonds formed eating biscuits on a bench in the freezing playground.

**Critic of the nanny state: Chris Snowden, right, and, far right, as a schoolboy at RGS**

**New book out in January: Jane Barrett, right and above, pictured in the 1987 Under 16 hockey squad**



**Happy memories: Paul Binding, bottom right and below, pictured in 1966**

**Paul Binding** (Left RGS 1968)

I was assistant English teacher at Ripon Grammar School from September 1966 to July 1968, so even when I left (I'd then be 25) not significantly older than the sixth-formers.

One reason for my applying for the job at RGS was that, many years before, my mother (who had died in 1965) had been at Ripon High School, as its school for girls then was called, and been very happy there. I too was for the most part very happy at RGS.



The sixth form I took right through to A-level English literature was a singularly pleasant group, and two members of it, David English and Bruce Oldfield, I have seen with real enjoyment in recent years, and I have followed their interesting careers keenly.

I also have very good memories of reading with lower forms books for the young that were then new, and are now classics - those of Alan Garner, for instance.

The atmosphere between teachers and pupils was one of a friendliness I had not known in my own school, and that made a very great

impression on me. I went on organised long walks in the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors with pupils, and I also arranged weekly folk-dance sessions.

I lived just outside the city, along with some other teachers, in Quarry Moor House, which provided a dependable home for me. One of those living there too, Ben Smith, organised a trip in summer 1967 to Poland. This is still one of the outstanding experiences of my whole life, and I'd imagine of the boys and girls who went with us.

Poland was then an authoritarian Eastern bloc country, regulating its visitors' movements, but even so we succeeded in having meetings with ordinary Polish people and in visiting parts of the beautiful southern Polish countryside that were not tourist-orientated.

My greatest friendship of my Ripon years was with the head of the English department, Ethel Allison, a keen intellect with a particular feeling for Gerard Manley Hopkins and T.S. Eliot, and a perceptive, lively, humorous individual with whom I was in very regular contact after leaving the school. Her death from cancer in 1971, after a painful illness, and in comparatively early middle age, was a great sorrow for me - and for many others, I know.

Since the 1960s I have not pursued a school teaching career but have worked largely as a freelance writer, faithful, I hope, to the love of literature I was there to stimulate at RGS.



**Chris Snowden** (Left RGS 1994)

After a year in work I went to Lancaster University to read history. After graduating I stayed in Lancaster working for an internet start-up company, becoming managing director in 2001. After the company was sold off I went into digital media in the regional press, first in Darlington and then in Brighton.

From 2006, I gradually moved into journalism. My first book, Velvet Glove, Iron Fist: A History of Anti-Smoking, was published in 2009 and was followed by The Spirit Level Delusion (2010) and The Art of Suppression (2011).

Having found a niche as a critic of the 'nanny state' and a debunker of bad statistics, I became the head of lifestyle economics at the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), a free-market think tank, in 2013.

Having been one of only a handful of pupils to have taken an economics A-level in my year, I now visit schools around the country

talking about taxation, income inequality and advertising.

I write about a range of issues for Spectator Health, City AM, the Telegraph and Spiked, and publish several pieces of original research with the IEA each year.

My first book for the IEA, 'Selfishness, Greed and Capitalism', was published last year and can be downloaded for free from [www.iea.org.uk](http://www.iea.org.uk).

Another, as yet untitled book, is scheduled for next year.

I ended up at an economic think tank via a circuitous route so am the last person to ask for careers advice but I would encourage any students who are considering studying economics at university to look into the IEA's intern programme.

I live in West Sussex with my wife and daughter. I continue to support Middlesbrough FC and enjoy playing snooker, badly.



Chris pictured in his first year at RGS, left, and today, right



# Where are they now?

## Abigail Scott Paul (Left RGS 1994)

I am deputy director of communications at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF). I oversee all JRF's external communications, promoting policy recommendations and practical solutions to solve poverty in the UK. This involves taking complex messages, translating them into comprehensible copy and accessible content, and disseminating them to stakeholders who have the power to deliver lasting social changes.

I oversee all JRF's content production, media relations, digital communications and stakeholder management within the Communications and External Affairs Department of JRF's HQ in York and my work involves communicating and engaging with government, both national and local: MPs, civil servants, parliamentarians, business and employers, as well as a whole host of other people.

My career in communications has been via the traditional route of starting at the bottom – making cups of tea—and working my way up. When I graduated from Cambridge University (MA in modern languages) my first job was as a 'runner' for a TV production company in London. This involved delivering VT tapes to the now defunct Television Centre on Wood Lane and tending to the every need (mainly finding the nearest bottle of Chardonnay) of producers and directors of shows like 'Later with Jools Holland'. I quickly decided TV wasn't for me (too many egos!) but I did want to work with journalists so I applied for a job as press assistant at luxury interior design business Colefax & Fowler. My languages proved useful when I helped to launch wallpaper and fabric collections in Milan and Madrid. I then moved from interiors to exteriors, working as a press officer at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) (highlighting at interview my knowledge of classical architecture gained through my classics A-level - thanks Miss Richardson). I loved my three years there and ended up as head of press at the time when Channel 4 first started broadcasting the Stirling Prize live. I was able to rub shoulders with all the greats of British architecture, including a very surreal afternoon tea with Zaha Hadid at the V&A.

In my late 20s I decided to have a bit of a break and went travelling round South America for three months, before ending up in Australia where I got a job as communications manager for international architects Denton Corker Marshall. I ran the public launch of the Manchester Civil Justice Centre - the largest civil law courts in Europe - as well as project managing a major monograph and exhibition of the practice as part of the Melbourne Design Festival.

You can take the girl out of Yorkshire, but... after five years and with a small boy in tow, I decided to move closer to family. I identified JRF as a potential place of interest to work and I was lucky enough to get a temporary contract in the press team. Seven years on, I am still here and loving it. With 13 million people living in poverty in the UK, there's never been a more important time to be working to influence social change.

I have very fond memories of my time at RGS. In 2013 I organised a reunion for my year (1987-1994) and was thrilled to catch up with so many old faces.



Abigail Scott Paul in the tennis team, bottom left and in school uniform, top right. Above, more recently outside Ten Downing Street. Elaine Bamford, right, pictured when she was at school. Former mayor of Cheltenham John Rawson, bottom right and below, pictured with fellow RGS prefects in 1967



## Elaine Bamford (Jackson) (Left RGS 1989)

I would like to volunteer my story as I feel less successful students deserve some recognition too, and to show how fragile everything can be in this life, despite the great education given to us by RGS.

After leaving RGS, I spent two years at Harrogate College gaining the NNEB Diploma, becoming a nanny before moving to Portsmouth with my then fiancé from 1992 to 1996, where I worked as a nursery nurse and then a deputy play leader.

My history of accidents caught up with me and, after falling over at football, breaking my knee and destroying all the ligaments, I ended up in hospital for eight days, permanently disabled with osteoarthritis.

I lived in Harrogate from 1996-2002, working as a teaching/special needs assistant, then with profoundly disabled adults, a job I really loved despite suffering additional injuries there.

I studied for a university certificate in care management, was forced out of my job and won an unfair dismissal case. Anxiety and depression set in.

I went on to work in a care home before getting married in 2006 to Julian, a manager for a big company in Bradford. Depression increased on discovering we could not have children. Now also suffering with dystonia, I suffered a further injury, leaving me with chronic pain and fibromyalgia, alongside back pain and coccydynia.

Two years of hospital treatments meant I was unable to work and I gained weight. In 2011 I won my case for a gastric bypass, lost nine stone and dropped six dress sizes. I live in Otley, in constant pain, on lots of medication, visiting hot places just for a bit of pain relief.

Achievements: Married my husband; published Vortex Manor, a children's book, in 2008, selling around 350 copies; write poetry and have had several poems published; won Radio 2's Popmaster quiz twice; adopted our lovely dog, George, from the Dogs Trust; travelled to Australia, Florida (where we own a timeshare), Las Vegas, Mexico, various areas of Europe and the UK.

Looking forward to Graceland, Tennessee, with future plans for Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and California.

It would be great for anybody to get in touch and say hello, as chronic pain is a very lonely existence: [elaine@vortexmanor.com](mailto:elaine@vortexmanor.com)



Before and after: Elaine Bamford lost nine stone and dropped six dress sizes

## John Rawson (Left RGS in 1967)

I was born in Ripon and was a pupil at the school from 1960 to 1967, during which time I did quite well at exams and abysmally badly at games.

I was awarded an open scholarship in modern history at St John's College Oxford in 1967 and graduated in 1970, after which I also studied for and gained a doctorate.

I have worked in marketing for the past 43 years and started my own business in 1995.

I have lived in Cheltenham since 1973 and served as a local councillor there for 33 years, including terms of office as chairman of Gloucestershire County Council and mayor of Cheltenham.

My current voluntary roles include president of the Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts. I am married with two daughters and now semi-retired.





Margaret and Tony pictured centre back row with Julie in front at the opening of the Lichfield Changing Place in Heathrow's Terminal 5, bottom right. Margaret at RGS, below, pictured in 1964



# 'A mother can only take so much'

**M**argaret Clough did not set out to change the world. But having a disabled child led this junior school teacher to launch a campaign which has challenged business leaders and politicians all over the globe.

Her daughter Julie is profoundly mentally and physically handicapped after being brain damaged at birth and, following years of putting up with appalling facilities for the severely disabled in public places, Margaret finally snapped 14 years ago.

The turning point came when, humiliatingly, she was forced to change her then 29-year-old daughter in a body bag storage room at a major international airport because there was nowhere else available. When she complained next time it happened, they were moved to a strip and search room in the security area.

"I was so hurt people could treat my daughter like that," says Margaret, who is originally from Ripon and used to teach at Ascham House School in Newcastle until she retired six years ago.

The shocking treatment Julie received drove Margaret to start her campaign for more accessible toilets and changing places for disabled people in 2002.

"Wherever we went Julie had to be laid on toilet floors to be changed because she cannot stand or walk to sit on a toilet. Would you lay a loved one on a dirty toilet floor with their head next to a toilet bowl where someone has just urinated?

"A mother can only take so much, and after lying her on the floor of some horrendous places including wet and smelly toilet floors in hospitals, arenas and shopping malls, I decided enough was enough.

"Nobody should have to go through the unnecessary indignity and difficulties we face, just to visit the toilet."

Working alongside her 38-year-old son, Tony, who has just been appointed an MBE for his work on the campaign, called Space to Change, Margaret has helped establish proper disabled changing areas in high profile venues such as Arsenal and Manchester United football clubs, the O2 Arena and the National Exhibition Centre as well as in airports, hospitals, theme parks and shopping centres.

But she wants to see specialist facilities, known as Changing Places, with space for the user, their carer, a changing bench and a hoist, in more public places: "Julie was brain damaged through neglect at birth and my determination to achieve what is needed for severely disabled people such as her has since been at the

**Ruth Savage discovers how a former junior school teacher, who left Ripon Grammar School in 1968, has helped improve conditions for disabled people all over the world**

forefront of my life," explains Margaret. "Just think what a difference it will make for stroke victims, MS sufferers, injured war veterans, and all other disabled people confined to wheelchairs."

Modest and softly spoken, Margaret, 69, is not a naturally feisty person. But her resolve to help improve the lives of the disabled has forced her into the spotlight. She has argued her case, face-to-face, with the heads of major international companies and given talks and presentations to a range of organisations.

She and Tony, who has undergone successful treatment for a brain tumour, have even been invited to appear in front of the European Parliament: "Tony and I together make a formidable team. It is very frustrating when businesses say they can't afford to install a Changing Place when you know they can or should do. We keep contacting them and saying 'One day you may need this facility' and often, in the end, it works."

Their campaigning work, which is all voluntary, has taken them all over the world, including Chicago, Frankfurt and Vancouver: "We have given a talk to the International Air Transport Association in Barcelona," says Margaret. "And we are hoping to persuade Orlando Airport in Florida to put Changing Places in, as many disabled children travel there.

"At one event, I spoke to a crowd of more than 200 people from different American airlines and airports. My final sentence was 'The UK

has over 700 and the US has no Changing Places Come on ,America.' I got a standing ovation.

"But our ultimate highlight was our invitation to the European Parliament. Hopefully a law will be passed that will require these specialist toilets, needed by one in 284 people, to be installed alongside ordinary toilets. This would mean disabled people could travel to wherever they wish. A quarter of a million people in the UK need these facilities to enable them to get out and about and enjoy the day-to-day activities most of us take for granted."

After her horrendous airport experiences with Julie over the years, Margaret is particularly delighted at their success in establishing three Changing Places toilets at Manchester and Heathrow airports, two at Gatwick and Stansted and one each at Newcastle, Birmingham, Leeds and East Midlands airports.

"In addition, there is a beautiful lounge in Heathrow's Terminal 5 for people with reduced mobility, which includes a Changing Place. It is named the Lichfield Suite after where we live now, in recognition of all the work we have done and we are very proud of this."

Last year, Margaret and Julie helped Virgin Airlines and British Airways trial a new hoist for transferring disabled passengers into an aircraft seat: "Rather than being manhandled and thrown into a seat, the Eagle Hoist can easily lift a disabled person and can be completed in the allowed timeframe of seven minutes to ensure there are no delays. Now most UK airports are using them."

On a return visit to her home city of Ripon recently, she noted that more could be done for the disabled here: "The city centre and Fountains Abbey definitely need Changing Places for local people and visitors. This would allow more people to visit this beautiful city."

But she reflected on how far she has come: "When I left Ripon Grammar School in 1968, I never dreamed that one day I would have the honour of talking to distinguished directors and executives of well-known companies.

"The greatest recognition is my son receiving his MBE. I am very proud and excited to be going to Buckingham Palace with him. It's just a pity they don't have a Changing Place there." Following Margaret's visit, of course, that could soon be about to change...

[www.changing-places.org](http://www.changing-places.org)

\*Margaret (nee Humpleby) would love to hear from old friends on [margaretclough28@sky.com](mailto:margaretclough28@sky.com)



Main photograph by SARAH FRENCH



## School news

# Rave reviews for Billie's debut album

Ripon Grammar School sixth former and talented singer-songwriter Billie Marten has received rave reviews in the national and international press for her stunning debut album, recorded while studying for her exams.

The Sunday Times says Billie's Writing of Blues and Yellows is not just an excellent debut for a 17-year-old: "It's an excellent debut, period." Critics on the Irish News and Les Echos are also full of praise and The New York Times advises Billie's album is one not to miss: "This 17-year-old British songwriter harks back to eras before she was born on her quietly striking debut album."

Billie, born Isabella Tweddle, recorded the album in London and Ripon and wrote all 13 tracks, including her recent single Milk & Honey, herself. Some of the songs were written when she was only 14.

Now in the middle of A-level courses in art, English literature and French, she says it's surreal to think she has released an album: "I find it super silly. Not many humans get to do it, so I'm eternally grateful. The record has had some ridiculously nice reviews, I keep telling people I don't understand it."

The Sunday Times Culture section review predicts we will still be listening to Billie's songs in 20 years' time, going on to compare her to Nick Drake, John Martyn, Kate Bush and Joni Mitchell, both stylistically and in terms of the emotional pull she can apply with just a few piano chords and subtle vocals.

The rest of the British press appear to agree Billie is one to watch. The UK's leading music magazine Mojo puts her at number eight on its playlist, describing her as 'a preternaturally talented 17-year-old' who has left a trail of 'glassy-voiced folk lullabies' on the internet.

The Sunday Express gives Billie's album five stars, while The Guardian, sure there is even better to

Juggling school work with a music career isn't easy but Billie Marten has still managed to stun the critics with her first album. **Ruth Savage** talks to the talented rising star

come, praises her rich and nervily self-analytical lyrics: "Her vocals are a whisper in a world of clamour."

The Evening Standard, another newspaper which compares Billie to Kate Bush, says she creates all sorts of beguiling textures with songs that take time to yield their secrets: "Marten fashions her own world of fragile darkness."

Digital music magazine Never Enough Notes says it cannot find a flaw in Billie's truly outstanding album: "In the age of curated playlists, algorithms and streaming, we have forgotten the joy of discovering something new that genuinely takes your breath away."

And the Financial Times gives the album four stars out of five, saying: "The atmospherically worked mood of introversion is all the more impressive considering Marten's youth."

From a musical family, Billie's breakthrough came after she was discovered on YouTube when she was only 12 years old. Having turned down the chance to appear on the big TV talent shows, she eventually signed to Chess Club Records, a division of Sony Music, in 2015.

"I signed on January 5 and I remember because it was the day before my

## Writing of Blues and Yellows

WITH a voice as rich and smooth as honey, Billie Marten's dreamy, beguiling songs are sure to get under your skin. Writing of Blues and Yellows is an album you want to listen to again and again, and each time you notice something new.

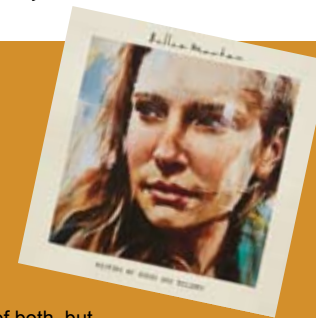
Billie writes about wilderness and nature, along with her upbringing in Ripon, her touching, reflective lyrics grappling with themes of loneliness and longing. She might sing about typically teenage insecurities and adolescent doubt but there is an underlying darkness and depth which makes it hard to believe she is only 17 years old.

With gentle guitar playing and subtle, sensitive arrangements, her songs are delicately crafted, not overproduced to the point where they lose their freshness. She has been compared to Kate Bush

## Clocktower review

and Joni Mitchell and there are certainly touches of both, but Billie is, most of all, herself. In Lionhearted, she sings of her desire to be braver: 'I've never been too bold...What would life be like/With a lionheart inside'. But what could be braver than presenting the world with such a deeply personal debut album as this?

Writing of Blues and Yellows comes straight from the heart - Billie's lionheart. **RS**



**Rising North Star: Billie Marten is impressing the critics in the UK and abroad with her first album, Writing Blues and Yellows**

mock exams and in the photo of me signing you can actually see my maths revision on the floor."

Billie was soon shortlisted for the prestigious BBC Sound of 2016 music industry poll, previously won by Adele and Ellie Goulding, and was praised by Ed Sheeran as 'stunning'.

Having performed at 11 festivals, including Bestival, Secret Garden Party and Latitude over the summer, Billie's first headline tour took in London, Manchester, Glasgow and Leeds: "This summer's festivals were the most gigs I've done consecutively, which has helped my confidence."

For the rest of this year she will be combining her academic studies with performing. "I'm very lucky to be doing both."

But it's not always easy: "I will often be doing exams or revising at the same time. I ruined several hotel rooms with oil paints in the sink."

"I keep the mentality that everyone has commitments outside their job and this just happens to be mine. I'll always keep school as a priority."

"But I don't bring music into school, I tend to stay quiet about anything music-related so my friends find out from Twitter or something. They're all hugely nice and proud of me and school has been incredibly supportive."

As for the future, she says she has no definite plans: "I'm off on a tour to celebrate the album, which will be beautiful. As always, I'll keep writing songs and singing them."

Her advice to other students looking for a career in music is: "Trust your gut. Put your music everywhere on the internet, even if you think it's shoddy. It's probably not."

## School is in the spotlight

RIPON Grammar School has been at the centre of national debate following Prime Minister Theresa May's announcement that she wants to create more grammar schools.

Both ITV Tyne Tees and BBC's Look North camera crews came into RGS to interview students and film

reports. And BBC's Radio 5 Live show with Adrian Chiles did a live broadcast from the school.

Headmaster Martin Pearman's views featured prominently in both The Yorkshire Post and The Northern Echo regional morning newspapers.

## Goodbye, Mrs Lofthouse

MANY students will have fond memories of German teacher Nicola Lofthouse, who has left her post as head of German after 26 years at RGS.

She came to the school in 1990, having studied German and French at Durham University.

This was Mrs Lofthouse's first full-time job and during her time here she organised a number of foreign exchange trips as well as work experience programmes, helping students forge long-lasting links with Germany.

For the past six years, she has worked part-time and now plans to tutor individual students and small groups in German, English and literacy. Her time at RGS, she says, has shaped both her professional and personal life.

Mr Pearman added: "Mrs Lofthouse has achieved outstanding results in her time and has kept German on the curriculum when many schools have decided to dispense with it."

## Mr Pearman set to retire after 13 years at RGS

HEADMASTER Martin Pearman will be retiring from his post at Ripon Grammar School in August 2017. Mr Pearman, who has overseen a series of major developments at the school, from the building of the new sports hall and humanities block to the extension of the boarding houses, alongside RGS's continuous impressive rise up the national and regional school league tables, said it would be a wrench to leave.

He and his wife Fiona moved to Ripon from Leeds with their three sons, Tom, Alex and Joe, who all attended RGS. They now plan to enjoy the opportunity to travel and spend more time as a family, he said.

"I feel that the time is right, both for school and myself, to seek new challenges and a different pace of life. It has been an absolute privilege to be Headmaster at such an inspiring school and to have worked with so many talented students and staff," said Mr Pearman, who was deputy head at Woodhouse Grove School before taking up his post at RGS.

"I have enjoyed seeing the school develop and have an enormous and enduring affection for it, which will stay with me long after I have left."

"This post is a tremendous opportunity for the right person to lead a superb school into the next exciting stage of its development. I am sure RGS will go from strength to strength in the future and will continue to serve the local community successfully."

## We're on a roll

RGS has, for the first time, got more than 900 students, including ten who joined the school in third form. The total on the school roll is now 920, including 81 boarders, which is also the highest number for some time.

## Careers event

CAN you help with the next RGS careers and higher education evening to be held on March 8, 2017? This year the focus will be on the arts, languages, law, business, public sector and media in order to raise our students' awareness of the wide range of career and educational opportunities that lie ahead.

We would be very grateful to anyone willing to share their knowledge with students and parents at the event. If you feel you could help with this, practice interviews or work experience, please contact head of careers Jill Locke on lockej@ripongrammar.co.uk



# 'THIS HAS BEEN MY LIFELONG DREAM'

After so badly breaking his arm in training it had to be put back together with a metal plate and screws, Jack Laugher was told he might never dive again. But after triumphing at the Olympics, he is now the greatest British diver of all time. He tells **Ruth Savage** about the passion that drives him

**W**hat was going through your mind when you realised you had won Britain's first diving gold medal at Rio?

It's extremely hard to explain what was going through my head. Pure elation and happiness really. Realising a lifelong dream at the age of 21 was surreal.

What happened between the 3m springboard semi-final in Rio, when you just scraped through in 12th place, and the final, only hours later, when you blew us all away and won silver?

My semi-final was the performance that was unnatural for me. I just put far too much pressure on myself to make the final and got myself nervous for no reason. Once I was in the final, it became easy.

Were you aware of the pride and excitement felt back home?

I tried to stay as far from social media as I could before I competed. I got a new phone with a phone number that nobody knew so I could only have specific people contact me (not even my parents had this number). It was only after I turned on my other phone and went on Facebook etcetera that I realised the overwhelming support I had throughout the Games. I'm truly grateful. When I got back, I tried to keep celebrations quiet, but I can't thank people enough for the support I've had in Yorkshire and Ripon. It has just been sublime. I've had people coming up to me in the

streets, saying that their son or daughter has started diving or they want to start diving and it has been fantastic.

How has your life changed since winning gold and silver at Rio?

My life has changed in a brilliant way. I'm seeing things I didn't think I'd see and meeting people I never thought I'd meet. Being invited to present awards at events and things too is really cool.

What age were you when you started diving and what attracted you to it as a sport?

I was seven years old when I started. Diving is a brilliant

combination of swimming and gymnastics, it's just so much fun to do.

What were the hardest things you had to give up in order to commit to diving?

I made many sacrifices throughout my school career, from dropping a GCSE to make



Jack had already been diving four years when pictured setting off for his first day at RGS with sister Katie



time for training to missing out on the birthday parties of some of my closest friends.

How many hours a week did you devote to diving while also studying for GCSEs and A-levels?

I was training a full schedule as well as being at school. Roughly 25 hours of training each week with one hour of travel either way to Leeds and back too.

What sacrifices did your family have to make?

My family were put under strain. Mum had to drive me to Leeds and back every day and Dad had to learn to cook for us. Ha!

What do you wish you'd known when you were 16?

That all the hard work was going to be worth it. There were many times when I was thinking the opposite!

Who inspired you?

I have always had previous Olympians and successful divers who have inspired me. Being able to compete against some of my diving idols such as Alex Despatie was a pleasure.

What did you enjoy most about your time at RGS?

I enjoyed the friendships I formed and what they've evolved into now. The teachers were fun, the lessons were great. My school experience was a lot of fun.

What did you like least?

Doing homework when I had been at school 9am to 4 pm and diving until 7pm, then having to get it all done after that!

You've had some major setbacks. How did you cope?

Of course I've

had major setbacks, from breaking bones to bad competitions. For me it was about trying to find the positives of those and training myself to not make the same mistakes again.

What is the most pressure you have been under?

The Rio 2016 Olympic synchro final, definitely. The final dive to be specific. Nothing can prepare you for being in first place going into the final round of the Olympics.

How do you stay calm and focussed during competitions?

I like to stick to a routine. It's something I've been doing for years now. Focussing whilst listening to music is the main key to it.

So what do you listen to on your headphones in between dives?

Mostly Drake and other similar artists. Music with words to concentrate on at the same time as not being too distracting.

What drives you on?

My passion for this sport and the success I'm having with it.

How do you relax in your free time?

I play a lot of PlayStation. I also like to hang out with friends and my girlfriend. I have a fair bit of down time after the Olympics so it's about doing the things I never could before.

What are the benefits of being so famous now?

I wouldn't say I'm famous, but having nice things said about my performances by people who watched has been fantastic.

What are the drawbacks?

Now that I'm allowed to go out partying, being noticed and possibly judged is probably a downside. If I do something silly, people will know!

What are your plans for the future?

To continue with my diving but only after a long rest first. I have given up a lot of things over the years and sacrificed so much I just want to see my friends, have a takeaway if I want and do all the things normal people do. I need to let my body and mind recover after such a peak of my career.

What advice would you give to any young RGS athletes who dream of becoming a champion, like yourself, one day?

That no matter how hard it is trying to balance school and sport, you can find a way to do it to pursue your dreams in both. ■

Main photo by Press Association



# Our rising stars

**Ruth Savage** looks at just a few of the names to watch out for as Jack Laugher's success inspires our sporting students more than ever

**TED** Wainwright, 15, stood out as such an obviously talented rugby player when he first joined RGS that he trained with our upper sixth players while he was in second year. Already playing for Yorkshire Under 16s, he has just signed to Yorkshire Carnegie Rugby Club (Under 18s) in Leeds, one of very few schoolboys in the country to be offered an elite academy player contract.



Ted: rugby

**ANNA** Marley, 15, holds the title of English 100m Backstroke Champion for her age group following the Amateur Swimming Association's highly competitive national championships in August.



Sola: running

**MARIJKE** Booth, 13, a successful national rock climber, who trains three times a week and has been coached by former GB competitor Ellie Howard and UK lead and boulder champion Dave Barrans, finished runner up in the Under 14s UK Rock Climbing Championships in Glasgow and 13th in the Euro Youth Colours in Austria.



Oscar: diving

**HARRY** Cosham, 13, has been skiing since he was 18 months old and, aged nine, trained with World Cup coach Alfons Schmid in Austria. He has recently been selected for the British skiing squad, Ski England, another step towards his dream of winning Olympic gold.

**CHRISTA** Wilson, 13, has won gold and silver medals in prestigious national swimming competitions and has been selected for the elite British Swimming Development Pathway, a national talent development programme.



Toby: triathlon

**GEORGIE** Borchard, 12, has been picked for the elite British Gymnastics Tumbling Development Pathway. At the national qualifiers in Barnsley in March, Georgie won first place.

**HARRY** Fearn, 15, has competed in the British International Open Karate Championships.

**AMY** Mackenzie, 16, has been selected for

the Under 19s national netball squad. She plays premiership netball and northern league for Leeds Athletic, having also been selected for their senior squad despite only recently turning 16.

**SOLA** Sowole, 15, is a talented 100m sprinter, selected to represent the county at the English Schools' National Athletics Championships.

**TOBY** Osman, 16, has been placed on the elite British Triathlon Talent Identification programme, which involves training and racing with elite youths from all over the UK in the Super Series. He achieved his first Super Series podium position when he came third in the Windsor Duathlon and secured fourth position in his final competition of the series this year at the Commonwealth Games venue in Strathclyde. Next year Toby moves up a category to Juniors, when distances are doubled to include a 750m swim, 20km bike ride and 5km run. Toby has also competed at national level in cross country running.

**ANIKI** Schwarze-Chintapatla, 14, has been picked for the Under 16s England orienteering squad and has also competed in the English Schools' Cross Country Finals. She is the North Yorkshire 800m champion, with an impressive personal best of 2:26.9.

**IMOGEN** Vollans, 12, who has been trampolining for seven years since starting, aged five, with Northallerton Gliders, has reached the national trampolining finals.

**AMELIA** Borchard and **LUCY** Williams, both 15, have been selected for the elite Tier 1 England Hockey development path. They were both part of the Under 14s RGS netball team which won a place in the school's history books when they became the first squad to make it into the national finals last year.

**OSCAR** Groundwater, 11, is another of RGS's talented divers and has just finished fourth in his age group in the national finals.

RGS PE teacher and Laugher family friend **Helen Mackenzie** flew to Rio along with Jack's mother and sister to watch the competition from the poolside. She tells us what it was like to be there

Three years ago I had a registration plate made for Jack's 18th birthday. It said RIO GOLD. I have followed his career for years and believed in him as long as I have known him.

Now here I was with Jack's mum Jackie and sister Katie, all decked out in our Team GB caps, flags and T-shirts as we arrived at the Maria Lenk Aquatic Centre to watch Jack and partner Chris Mears in the 3m springboard Olympic synchro finals.

The first people we saw as we walked through the door to the pool were Jack and Chris on the 3m board. This was a warm up session just prior to the final.

Jack always dives on the left hand board, Chris on the right. Their hurdle steps are the same, their take off height is the same, their speed of rotation is the same. It's incredible to watch such precision at such speed.

Jack and Chris nailed their final practice dive and left to prepare for the walk on ceremony. I was so excited to see them process around the pool, but so nervous for them. What a weight on such young shoulders.

As the boys walked on and were announced we cheered like crazy, wanting them to know we were there. Jack gave us a wink and a nod of acknowledgement.

Around the pool the audience were on our side, buoyed by our exuberance and excitement. Ever the teacher, I shushed everyone every time Jack and Chris took to the board. I didn't want distractions, no noise in the crowd to make the boys lose their focus. Once they hit the water though, we were so ridiculously loud, getting rid of the tension that we had held within while they executed the dive. We breathed again, said a prayer of thanks and willed the judges to score in our favour.

Jackie, Katie and I held hands every time they dived, hardly daring to look, urging them to nail the dive. By the third round - out of six - they were in first place, the pair to beat. The crowd was buzzing. They could sense a medal - possibly gold - was on the cards.

We could see Ady, Jack's coach, giving his familiar two fingered whistle. We could see the commentator, Leon Taylor, becoming agitated. Having nailed their nemesis fifth round dive, they entered the last round. One dive to go. They needed to land on their heads. This is a diving expression - if a diver lands on his back, or feet first, or completely fluffs the dive, it is classed as a 'failed dive' and scores zero. A poor dive, but landed 'on the head' will still actually score.

No GB athlete has ever won a diving Olympic gold medal. The boys were in first place. Could they hold on? Only time would tell. The American pair nailed their final round with the dive of the competition, taking them into first place. Jack and Chris could not afford a mistake. Their last dive was OK, not perfect, both divers landing a little short. We held our breath, eyes fixed firmly on the score board. That magic '1' appeared - the boys were in first place. Paul Mears, Chris's dad, was so excited he



## Teacher who witnessed history in the making



forgot the Chinese pair still had to dive. "They've won, they've won," he cried, with tears streaming down his face. He then realised his mistake. Nobody had ever knocked the Chinese off the top spot in the Olympics. They could not be written off. They dived; it was good, but it was a lower tariff than Jack and Chris's dive and they only scored enough for third place. Now we really had won the gold. Pictures of Jack and Chris hugging, crying, high fiving were on the screen. The British team went berserk.

The tiny village of Littlethorpe had an Olympic gold medalist. Ripon Grammar School had an Olympic gold medalist. Madness. The next few minutes were a blur. Lots of tears and hugs. Our phones went mad. We were ushered over to where the medal ceremony was to take place, everyone making way for us as though we were royalty.

The medal ceremony - oh such magic. A joyful

occasion when Britain wins gold, but when you know the winners, it is mind-blowing. We sang our hearts out to the National Anthem - loud and proud. Jack blew his mum a kiss and then started the many interviews. We threw them our Union Jacks.

That night, after the boys did their press interviews and went through doping control they caught a service bus to come and see us. Two Olympic gold medallists jumping on the Rio National Express - because what's the only thing you want to do when you've won Olympic Gold? Hug your mum and sister of course.

This was a private moment and I didn't want to intrude, but I did capture it on my phone so that Jackie would have it forever - that first moment as she hugged her champion boy. "Where's Miss Mac?" said Jack, and then it was my turn. Hugs and medal swapping and photos and more hugs.

That gold was fifteen years in the making and worth every second. The disappointment of London 2012 no longer the elephant in the room, completely behind him now. Because he never gave up. He has mental toughness, resilience and stickability. Jack Laugher was, is and always will be an Olympic gold medallist. And I think all of us there realised nothing would ever be the same again.

But Jack was the only one not drinking that evening as he had to focus on his individual event. He sat next to his mum and chatted excitedly with her all night, laughing at his dad's TV interview back home where their dog Alfie's nose appeared on screen searching for a biscuit. He watched in mock horror at a video of Katie and I running through and swimming in a fountain. If anyone has any qualms about how Jack and Chris will cope with the fame that is coming their way, forget them. They are both as easy and as natural as it's possible to be. You would never know we were in the company of two Olympic champions.

Jack's individual 3m springboard semi finals turned out to be nail-biting stuff. His last dive just scraped him into the final, in 12th spot. Phew. Back in our seats for the final, we had my dad's lucky hanky, Katie's St Christopher, her Christ the Redeemer keyring, and Jackie's lucky hare badge. We left nothing to chance. Plus we had all of Ripon behind us.

But in the final, Jack was amazing - the difference between the morning's performance and the evening's was unbelievable, coming from 12th to second to achieve a world class score and claim the beautiful Olympic silver medal that he totally deserved.

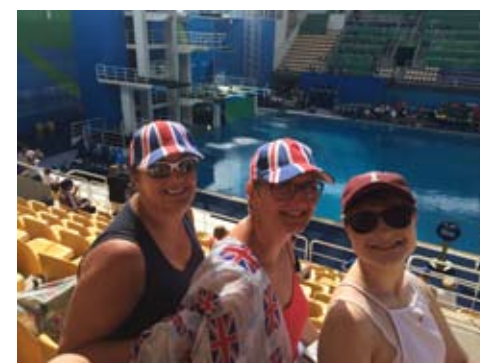
I travelled half way round the world to support this boy. Was it worth it? Too damn right it was.

Gold star: Helen Mackenzie pictured left with Jack and with his mum and sister, below. Main photograph, Jack and Chris on the podium

## That's my boy

PROUD mum Jackie, pictured with Jack, below, gives us her reaction to her son's success: "We are incredibly proud of Jack's achievements this summer in Rio. His determination and dedication to his sport was evident from an early age. He competed at the Commonwealth Games in Delhi aged just 15 whilst studying for his GCSEs and in the 2012 London Olympics whilst studying for his A-levels.

"His determination showed through after he broke his arm aged 14, resulting in a plate and seven screws in his arm and the prediction that he may never dive again. But after just six weeks he was competing at an international competition in Barcelona, in a 'feet first' dive list (to protect his arm), and still managed to come fourth! The support and mentoring that Ripon Grammar School gave Jack was invaluable, it allowed him to focus on both his sport and his academic studies."





**Classmate Toby Kinread:** Jack's Olympic success was phenomenal and the gold ribbons on display in shops and houses in Ripon are testament to how proud everyone is of him. I drew him a little sketch to congratulate him. He put it on his Twitter and I witnessed the flurry of approving messages from female (and some male) fans. I was in Jack's class from the start of RGS and will never forget his jaw-dropping superiority in our first gymnastics lesson. I also remember him leaving school early to be interviewed by the BBC as well as arriving at school with two hours training already under his belt. The theme in all this comes down to one word: dedication. He would not be where he is today without it and I think his dedication is something we can all commend.

**Deputy head Marita Murray:** I remember Jack's GCSE year group celebrating their time at RGS with a traditional leavers' assembly. After Jack was presented with a certificate for being an outstanding sportsman, his peers called for him to perform a back flip. Myself and Mr McGrann looked at each other in horror at the back of the hall. I think we nearly had heart failure as the future Olympic prospect, wearing full school uniform, performed to the tumultuous applause of his year group. Jack, the commensurate professional landed safely, grinned and waved to us. No harm done.

**Classmate Sian Avery:** Watching live as Jack achieved his second Olympic medal, it was impossible not to feel the force of the whole year, and the whole school, willing him to succeed. I can't imagine how proud Jack himself must have felt when he did, given the sense of pride and excitement it generated in everyone who could lay even a little claim to him.

**PE teacher Helen Mackenzie:** When his friends were all going out enjoying themselves, like most teenagers, Jack was training six hours a day, six days a week. When Mr Pearman read out his successes in assembly, Jack would slide down his chair, not wanting the limelight. A champion he may be, but a normal, kind, modest, caring unassuming Yorkshire lad he most definitely is.

**Classmate Ben Blakey:** He was destined to achieve great things, the way he dedicated himself over the years. Although a gold medal is an astonishing achievement, those who knew LJ (his nickname in his younger school years) aren't surprised as it's something he strived for every day of every week. The whole of RGS has followed his diving career and will continue to do so.

**Chemistry teacher Richard Grime:** I recall when aged 14 how Jack would leave my lessons at 11am, a few minutes early, to rush into Ripon centre to catch the bus to Harrogate to go and train at the Hydro. I was seriously impressed with how he managed this himself at a young age but also how he was keen to miss as little of the chemistry lesson as possible. I also recall at GCSE discussing how he had 'only' got an A on a test, but I understood that all his training etcetera made it difficult to get an A\*. He was very disappointed with the A and told me he would ensure he got an A\* on the next test - impressive commitment from someone determined and destined to be a winner. I recall several meetings, well before London 2012, during the sixth form with Jack, his mum and his coach (Ady Hinchliffe) where we looked at how we could fit his education around his training and competitions around the world. I recall vividly Ady saying it was all about Jack medalling at the



*Jack Laugher was a star in the making from the day he first arrived at Ripon Grammar School. Former teachers and classmates recall the boy who grew up to be the greatest British diver of all time—and explain how they felt watching him win gold and silver medals in Rio*

**Headmaster Martin Pearman:** I do remember him doing back flips from a standing start to get a higher place in the lunch queue. (I don't think his coach would have been impressed). His ability as an athlete was apparent from an early age but Jack was always very modest about his success and let his actions do the talking; as a consequence he was very popular with both staff and students. Everyone is so proud of what he has achieved and he fully deserves his success, which I am sure will inspire our next generation of students to be the best they can be.

**Biology teacher Keith Miller:** Jack was always modest beyond belief and very popular with his peers. He was a mature individual and very well organised regarding his academic work. Above all he had a wry sense of humour which was very endearing.

**Maths teacher Greta Hills:** I remember him being very focused on his diving. I was on the edge of my seat for the whole time he was on the TV in Rio, wishing him well. I never thought that I could be so hooked on diving.

**Classmate Hannah Hickingbotham:** He was always so much fun to have in a form and never let on to how much training and hard work he was doing. It was amazing to get to see him competing and doing so well in the Olympics.

**PE teacher Siobhan Gilfillan:** Jack was an extremely modest and humble student; he was always very controlled even when approaching competition. He certainly demonstrated a steely determination, which all successful sportspeople seem to have, during the two years I taught him. Without arrogance, Jack was able to bring a tremendous insight into our sports psychology lessons. We all learnt a great deal about the psychology behind elite performers and the support network required - he certainly made our lessons very real and interesting. I have nothing but admiration for the way he was able to balance a successful full time diving career with his A-level studies; he remained completely grounded. Balancing the demands of training, travel to all corners of the world, competing in top competitions and fitting in the odd essay and assessment must have been tough but he didn't complain or make excuses too often. Jack deserves the amazing success he has enjoyed; he was always able to take success and the odd set back in his stride and learn from it, always coming back stronger - it was an amazing sight to see him celebrate in Rio.

Gymnastics teacher Mike Garvey always enjoyed reminiscing how, in his first gym lesson in first form, Jack caused Mike great panic when he immediately came in and started somersaulting - Mike was totally unaware that he had a young star in the making!

**On top of the world but with his feet firmly on the ground: Jack with team mate Chris Mears and their gold medals in Rio, left. Above, diving in the individual 3m springboard final in Rio. Far left: Toby Kinread's sketch.**

*All Rio pictures courtesy of the PRESS ASSOCIATION*

Rio Olympics. I can also say how organised Jack was. He planned his work around his competition and training schedule, and he would complete work while at events around the world and always be back in lessons when he said he would.

**Maths teacher Gillian Cutress:** I remember him on stage in his Speedos during Charity Week. He was also in a video with Tom Daley dancing to 'I'm sexy and I know it.' It went down a storm in school.

**French teacher Anne Swainston:** He was always such a friendly, personable and charming young man, ever cheerful and with a great sense of humour. He was conscientious, quietly determined and resilient yet completely modest and unassuming and he had such an easy manner with those around him.





# Hugh lands job in the Treasury

IT WILL come as little surprise to those who knew Hugh McHale-Maughan during his time at RGS that he has landed a job at the Treasury.

Hugh, who achieved six A\*'s at A-level and was head boy at RGS, recently graduated with first class honours in politics, philosophy and economics (PPE) from Brasenose College, Oxford.

He has taken up the post of policy advisor, working in the financial services wing of the Treasury.

Based in the Treasury's main building on Parliament Square, next to the Houses of Parliament, Hugh explains: "Specifically, I'm looking at the impact of Brexit on the secondary financial markets (stocks, shares and bonds). All quite technical and ludicrously complicated—but certainly a very interesting time to be entering the policy world."

Hugh attended Brasenose with former head girl Georgina Sanderson, who studied medicine and also achieved a first class honours degree. She will be continuing with the clinical phase of

her medical training in Oxford: "It's difficult to believe three years have passed so quickly," says Hugh.

"It seems only a matter of weeks since Georgi and I were sitting together in Ripon Grammar School hall, listening to the College schools officer speak about Oxford and Brasenose.

"I was particularly grateful to have Georgi also at Brasenose for the last three years. Particularly when leaving one of the warmest, happiest communities at Ripon, it was invaluable to have one of my best friends always around the college, ready for a hug, a cup of tea and a chat.

"It was striking to me how much Georgi and I had enjoyed our time at school compared to other students at Brasenose, an experience replicated for RGS alumni across other universities. It is also very telling that school friendship groups continue to flourish, even as we disperse geographically around the country.

It is a true testament to the extraordinary nature of the school."



**First class: Hugh, top, and above, with Georgi on graduation day**

## One of the world's top brains

A FORMER RGS student has been named among the top one per cent of scientists who are 'the world's most influential scientific minds' and whose publications have been deemed as having exceptional impact.

Dr Ian Richardson, senior lecturer in animal sciences at the University of Bristol's School of Veterinary Sciences, was listed on the Thomson Reuters highly cited researchers' roll, which recognises leading academics in the sciences and social sciences from around the world, last year.

Ian, who left RGS in 1968, studied at King's College London and is married to Imelda, another former RGS student who has just retired as chief inspector for the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales.

Dr Richardson's work in meat research spans over 25 years and aims to improve the quality of red meats with particular emphasis on post-slaughter technologies that enhance eating quality and composition. Latterly his work has concentrated on understanding the interaction between composition, antioxidants and packaging systems with the aim of reducing waste through the food chain.

Thomson Reuters identified the best and brightest scientists by analysing highly cited papers in science journals during the 11 year period 2003-2013.

**PARIS BIKE RIDE:** Past pupil Lewis Veakins, 23, cycled 300 miles from London to Paris in four days to raise thousands of pounds for a homeless charity. Lewis, who studied law at Liverpool after RGS, is currently working in a law firm and completed the trip with university friend Alex Ferguson, stopping in hostels along the way. They raised more than £2,000 for the Whitechapel Centre, a homeless shelter in Liverpool. Lewis was vice president and co-founder of Liverpool University's Help the Homeless Society.



**DR PAUL Hullah, who featured on the cover of the last issue of Clocktower, has had two new books published by Partridge Books. Climbable, his seventh collection of poetry, and We Found Her Hidden: The Remarkable Poetry of Christina Rossetti are now available from good booksellers.**



# AMAZING GRACE

**T**alented past pupil Grace Lancaster has secured a coveted acting role after graduating from the Rose Burford College of Theatre and Performance with a first class honours degree in actor musicianship.

Grace, who left RGS in 2010 and took part in many school productions, starring in The Rise and Fall of Little Voice, Hairspray and Rent, plays Wendy in Underneath a Magical Moon, a reimagining of J M Barrie's Peter Pan through the eyes of Wendy Darling. The national tour of York playwright Mike Kenny's Tutti Frutti production, aimed at young children and their families, starts at York Theatre Royal and runs until December 31.

Grace, a gifted singer and saxophone player, was delighted to land her first professional stage role, although she had to miss her graduation as it clashed with rehearsals, so enjoyed a mock ceremony with friends and family in York instead: "I finished in June and had a few auditions, then this job came up in my home town of York, where all my friends and family can come and see me fresh out of drama school. It's incredible."

She is enjoying the whole experience, she says: "The play has very strong visuals and a lovely script, with lots of physical action. Kids love hearing the story of Peter Pan told in a different way that's funny and new and fresh. Hopefully there are some moving bits as well for grown-ups to reflect on."

Director Wendy Harris said Grace stood out at the workshop auditions: "You always get a couple of people who shine out because you're looking for so

**Ruth Savage catches up with a former student making a name for herself in the competitive world of musical theatre**



**Shone out: Grace above and on stage as Wendy**

many skills: acting, musicianship, singing and creating a character, and Grace's singing and musical ability was outstanding. She moves well too."

Grace, who was a leading member of RGS's Big Band, was particularly attracted to the musical nature of the production: "The songs and dancing are so much fun. We do hip hop, some robot and ballet, it's just a whirlwind of music and dance." She plays the ukulele, accordion and clarinet as well as the tenor saxophone: "I'm an accordion playing pirate at one point," she laughs.

During her degree course, Grace performed throughout the UK and abroad with the popular New York Brass Band, which features other former RGS students and is in demand at music festivals, including Glastonbury and Bestival. They have also played at a number of celebrity wedding and private parties, entertaining stars including McFly's Danny Jones, Jamie Oliver, Liam Gallagher and Ellie Goulding, as well as being picked to support Van Morrison when he came to Harrogate.

Grace was one of just 15 students accepted on the highly competitive actor musicianship course at Rose Burford, which has one of the highest rates of employment success after graduation. She was signed by the Narrow Road Company, a leading theatrical agency based in London and Manchester, in her final year.



**Passion and commitment: Wilkinson**

## Green award

FORMER student Phil Wilkinson, who left RGS in 1989, has won a prestigious environmental award in Australia.

Having taken maths, physics and chemistry at A-level, Phil studied mechanical engineering at the University of Sheffield before moving to Australia, where he has been working in the refrigeration and air conditioning industry since 1995.

His Bob Brown Foundation Deni Greene Award is presented annually to an Australian who has made a significant contribution to energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

For the past 14 years, Phil has worked in a variety of high profile roles for the Australian Institute for Refrigeration, Air-conditioning and Heating (AIRAH) and is currently executive manager in government relations and technical services.

A founding member of the Green Building Council of Australia, Phil has been instrumental in bringing people from a range of disciplines across academia, industry and government to work together on improving sustainability in the built environment.

Environmentalist Bob Brown, founder of the Bob Brown Foundation, said: "Phil is a mechanical engineer who has demonstrated an amazing ability to achieve regulatory and behavioural change in an industry that has the potential to contribute significantly to reducing Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

"His courage and tenacity, underpinned by great communication skills and a strong technical background, have resulted in practical outcomes with far-reaching impacts.

"Phil is a rare find—the combination of technical expertise, a passion for effective communication and a deep commitment to improving sustainability of the built environment is a boon to us all."

AIRAH CEO Tony Gleeson added: "Phil has been a champion of the industry for many years and his zest, tenacity and collaborative approach have been tremendously effective."



**A**s a boarder at RGS, dancer Tim Casson recalls listening to the sound of the clock in the clock tower creaking and chiming: "The first thing that springs to mind when I think of RGS is the clock tower. That's a vivid memory."

He started as a weekly boarder in 1996: "This was quite an adjustment for me, especially as an only child, to be suddenly living with other people for most of the time."

"I didn't really feel I fitted in, growing up there. There was no serious bullying, but at RGS there were broadly two types of student, the academic ones, and the sporty ones. At lunchtime it was either studying in the library or playing football on the sports field and neither of those was really for me."

But Tim's view of the world and how he fitted into it was soon to change.

"Ashley Casey started at the same time as me, as the boarding house master, geography teacher and assistant to Mr Garvey in games. He was tall and imposing, with an ear-piercing whistle which he would employ if we were talking after lights out."

"I was terrible at games but always tried hard and so I got quite generous reports from him."

"And we did do some brilliant musical theatre productions at school. One year I was Willy Wonka in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. RGS is known for its academic prowess, but its pride in school productions - with all the acting, dancing, and music that's involved - is terrific."

"I used to go to dance classes on a Saturday morning and Mr Casey noticed that I would practise in the boarding house during the week. One day, he casually mentioned that there was a school for dancing in Croydon - the BRIT School, with such notable alumnae as Adele, Jessie J and Amy Winehouse. The impact this sudden knowledge had on me was massive. I suddenly discovered that there was a school for doing the thing I loved, with other people who love it too - and that I could do it as a job."

"I will always feel so grateful to Mr Casey for that. He saw my potential and cared enough to point me in the right direction. I still see him sometimes - he's a doctor of physical education - and we always talk about dance."

Having left RGS in 2001, after BRIT School Tim followed his dream all the way to a degree in musical theatre at Bird College and an MA in contemporary dance at London Contemporary Dance School, going on to perform all over the world, including on New York's Brooklyn Bridge, while also enjoying a stint on Broadway. He's been in commercials, music videos, the Hollywood blockbuster World War Z and performed for established dance companies such as Jasmin Vardimon, as well as playing Puck in Opera North's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. A course leader for a prestigious national dance company, Tim also choreographs for the stage and television.

Alongside all this, with his company Casson and Friends, he's on a pioneering mission to change the way people think and react to dance, by bringing it to people who wouldn't normally watch or take part. As part of this, his project The Dance WE Made wowed crowds during the Cultural Olympiad (part of London's Olympic Games). "I believe there is untapped creativity in everyone," says Tim. "All I do is ask ordinary members of the public



*Tim Casson struggled to fit in at school as a teenager. He tells Rebecca Chamberlain how he discovered the world of professional dance and about the inspirational teacher at RGS who pointed him in the right direction*



**DANCING IN THE STREET: Tim Casson performs in London**

about something that makes them happy, and then turn it into a series of dance moves in front of them. Then I put all the moves I've gathered into one performance, representing everyone who's contributed. I've had great feedback, people say it's changed their day, and opened dance up for them." From the delight and joy on people's faces displayed in films of the dances, which can be viewed on YouTube, it clearly works.

Since starting in 2012, The Dance WE Made has been performed at over 50 locations, but it was at the London Olympics that Tim earned himself a world record. By chance, a representative from the Guinness World Records heard about his work and when 152 people contributed dance moves from 20 different locations, the resulting performance claimed the record for the most choreographers for a single dance piece.

The work continues to develop and recently Tim and his friends created The Dance Leeds Made, which built on the original idea and went a bit further. "This one was slightly different," says Tim. "Instead of just me working at an event like Glastonbury or the London Olympics, three other dancers from Yorkshire Dance joined me and we put all of the sequences together at the end, performing to an 'accidental audience' of shoppers in the Trinity Shopping Centre in Leeds." What's next for The Dance WE Made? Abroad, Tim says. "I'd like to take it to different countries now to work with local dancers there to see how people respond, and link them with their own accidental audiences."

Alongside developing his groundbreaking public performance pieces, Tim has taught young dancers for the last 15 years, and he is currently the course leader for the National Youth Dance Company at Sadler's Wells in London. "This really opens up an opportunity for young dancers across the country."

We see about 500 young people in 'experience workshops' - a bit like auditions - and recruit 30. Then the company creates a show that tours nationally. My job is to support this process and help develop and signpost the young people into the right career for them when it's finished."

Tim hopes that more talent from home will come forward. "NYDC isn't just for seasoned and experienced young dancers. Anyone aged 16-18 can come along to a workshop, whether they've been doing ballet since they were four, or if they've recently picked up breakdancing moves from the internet. I'm still very connected to Yorkshire and I'd love to see more young people here engage with dance and realise their potential. There are also an increasing number of opportunities in the North for people to get into dance at any age via organisations such as Yorkshire Dance."

And Tim's message to young people at RGS now is: "Don't worry about not fitting in. There is so much out there to do that you may not even know is an option for you yet. There's a big world of opportunity. Find what you like doing, and don't let the struggle stop you from doing it. Take it from me - your hobby can be your career."

"And trust the teachers - they can see your potential, even if you can't. You might be surprised at how much you can do - but they probably won't be."

Tim's website, which showcases his career, forthcoming projects and links to the Sadler's Wells National Youth Dance Company opportunities can be found at: [www.timcasson.flavors.me](http://www.timcasson.flavors.me)

You can also discover more about The Dance WE Made at this website, which includes links to the videos on YouTube: [www.thedancewemade.co.uk](http://www.thedancewemade.co.uk)



**Tim as Willy Wonka at RGS**

*'RGS's pride in its school productions is terrific'*



**'A big world of opportunity': Tim Casson**



It has been a summer of reunions at Ripon Grammar School. We report on three fun-filled gatherings which rekindled old friendships and stirred many memories



Back together again: some of the former students in the school library, left to right, Susanna Bettley, Stephen Orton, Ricky Chatto, Philip Jackson, Richard Barnett, Philip Curry and Jacky Tarleton

**P**ast pupils, including a world renowned cellist and the daughter of the former headmaster, came from as far as Japan and the Canary Islands to gather at their old school again for the first time in 48 years.

Ripon Grammar School welcomed back the class of 1961-68 for a tour of their old classrooms, assembly hall, dining room and even the dreaded examination hall.

The former students, who also got to see the new sports hall and humanities and sixth form blocks, enjoyed tea and cakes in the library, where they looked through old photographs and were joined by their former chemistry teacher, David Postlethwaite. The group included the acclaimed cellist Stephen Orton, who studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama after RGS and went on to play all over the world, including Sydney Opera House and New York's Carnegie Hall.

Susanna Bettley, daughter of the then headmaster, Mr Atkinson, studied Russian at Durham University after RGS and travelled from Fuerteventura for the get together.

Colin Yarker, who has lived and worked in Japan since 1979 and runs the International Business Bureau in

### By Ruth Savage

Tokyo, was one of the driving forces behind the reunion. He said: "I am amazed how many people we managed to get together."

About 20 former students, who also came from all over the UK, including Devon, Somerset, Surrey and London, enjoyed a three course dinner at Ripon's Spa Hotel in the evening, followed by drinks at the One Eyed Rat. They met up again at Fountains Abbey the following day. One of the organisers, Jacky Tarleton, who went on to teach in Zambia and Kent after reading English at Durham University, said: "From the tea and cakes in the library, the welcoming banner, photos and other memorabilia, to the fascinating school tour, it was a wonderful trip down memory lane."

Jacky, who brought along some of her old school exercise books, including some from Mr Postlethwaite's chemistry lessons, said: "People are taking many fond memories back to their far-flung homes."

She added: "Stephen Orton proposed, at the end of the dinner, that we should all meet again in Ripon in three years' time - a proposal that was heartily endorsed."

*Photographs by SANDRA MORGAN*



Stephen and Richard study photos



All smiles (l to r) Dan Friday, Sam Sladen, Sam Bland, Aaron Fincham, Matthew Binks and Ben Evans catch up with head of sixth form, Terry Fell. Miranda Lockyer, Ashleigh Messenger, Mariah Rogers and Chelsea Brown with headmaster Martin Pearman. The whole gang, below



# BACK TO SCHOOL

**I**t had only been a matter of months since the RGS leavers of 2015 had been out of school but in July we had the chance to go back and catch up with our year group to discover how everyone was finding the daunting leap to university or the world of work, or to hear stories about our friends' exciting gap years. The Parents' Association set up a bar in the foyer, and it was the perfect opportunity to get back in touch with people we may not have had time to see since results day.

Also taking place in the school hall and library was a reunion for the RGS students of the Sixties, which allowed us to compare the experience of school life then to how it is nowadays, and to see how strongly people still felt about the school fifty years after graduating. The evening felt like a great

### By Nick Edwards

first step in our involvement with the Old Rips community and I personally hope there will be as much interest in a reunion of our age group in 50 years' time (possibly for the school's 500th anniversary in 2055).

There was a good turnout within our year group of nearly 50 former students, which demonstrates the value of the friendships and community atmosphere we experienced during our time at the school. There was of course an equal, if not better, attendance at Wetherspoons in Ripon afterwards. The evening really went to show how keen people were to stay connected to RGS and their fellow students.

*Photographs by NICOLA WOOLFENDEN*



Former teacher and Old Rip Greta Hills looks through exercise books with Jacky



More pictures overleaf



Stephen and Philip delve into the sports archives



Happy memories: Philip and Jacky



Familiar faces: Ricky and Philip linger over the whole school photo



# A summer of reunions



Tong yi Chan, Max Johnston, Mr Margerison, Ed Johnson, George Foster, Aiden Johnstone, Jane Geldard



Returning to our alma mater: Vicky Trayer, Tyler Robinson, Mr Pearman, Sam Bland and Sam Sladen



Going back to the Sixties: Tim Wray, Jill Moss and David Gibbon



Catching up in the dining hall: Josh Bligh, left, and Mattie Haynes, right, with friends



Cheers: (L-R) Tong yi Chan, Sophie Charlton, Jane Geldard, Ed Johnson and Lauren Langham



Three cheers for the Parents' Association, who set up a bar in the foyer: left to right, Ben Evans, Aaron Fincham, James Walker, Georgina Hudson-Moore, Joel Thornton, Matthew Binks, Will Dunn and Dan Friday

## RGS school rules

One former Sixties student brought along his original old school rules book which included these stern directives

- Boys are strictly forbidden to mount or dismount from buses whilst the vehicles are moving
- No boys are permitted to be in possession of fireworks, firearms, airguns, air pistols, or any dangerous weapon
- The throwing of stones or other missiles is absolutely forbidden and snowballing may be indulged in only when permission is given
- Boys are forbidden when cycling to hang on to motor lorries or other
- vehicles, which is a most dangerous practice and now illegal
- Boys are strictly forbidden to smoke or have tobacco in their possession
- Boys are not allowed to barter or have money
- transactions with one another, except under the supervision of a Master
- Disorderly or unmannerly conduct of any kind and loitering in the streets or in public places is forbidden



Former teachers and the boarding house cook joined past pupils for a nostalgic Sixties reunion. Report and photographs by **Sarah French**

Students of the Sixties took a trip down memory lane when they returned to their old school, five decades after leaving as pupils. They travelled from across the country for the reunion, with two flying in from the United States. For students who used to board, it was a chance to recall tales of derring-do and attempts to hide their mischievous schoolboy antics from masters.

Jamie Simpson and Paul Morris, who boarded in the late 1960s and early 1970s as sons of forces families, found their old bedrooms during a tour of School House, which remains a boys' boarding house today. Paul, who, with Jamie, was a first XV rugby player, said: "Once, we brought in loads of tadpoles, which of course grew into frogs and escaped. There were dead frogs all over the boarding house. It was horrible."

"We used to get away with murder, or at least we thought we were pulling the wool over the eyes of the masters but, looking back, they probably knew exactly what we were up to." Many of the school's Sixties alumni have gone on to achieve at a high level including Stephen Swindells, who became a consultant anaesthetist in the liver transplant unit at St James's Hospital in Leeds before using his expertise in Iraq and Afghanistan with the Royal Air Force, and Carolynne

O'Donoghue, who worked for the United Nations as a peace development officer in post-conflict Bosnia-Herzegovina. Professor Alan Plumb, a world renowned expert in meteorology and atmospheric dynamics, based at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, travelled from the US, as did Ralph Waggitt, who moved to the semiconductor industry in Silicon Valley in 1978. After studying geology at Oxford University,

who grew up at the school, together with her old French teacher Therese Howstan, who was there from 1958-1984.

"Miss Howstan inspired me to do A-level French and become a teacher, and a lot of my teaching methods echo hers. Of all the teachers here I remember Miss Howstan, and I hadn't seen her for 40 years," said Andreina. The reunion was co-organised by

Dave Cotson, a former teacher and head of fundraising for the North West Air Ambulance. He said: "We're delighted that so many people were able to come along." Current pupils took the Old Rips on tours of the school, including the new sports hall, sixth form centre, humanities block and extension to

the girls' boarding house, before many stayed for dinner with last year's leavers. Headmaster Martin Pearman said: "It was an absolute pleasure to welcome so many Old Rips back to Ripon Grammar School. Much of the school was familiar to them but they also enjoyed seeing how recent investment has extended the school facilities for boarders and day pupils to ensure the best possible education here for years to come."



School diners: former students enjoying the meal in their old school dining hall

Gareth Allinson joined the oil industry, spending eleven years as an exploration manager, while John Rawson studied history at Oxford and went on to be mayor of Cheltenham. Retired teachers also joined the reunion including Ben Smith, who taught geography for 25 years, David Postlethwaite, who taught chemistry and was deputy head for 26 years, and wood and metalwork teacher John Chambers. Ella Benigno was the boys' boarding house live-in cook for more than 30 years. She was joined by daughter Andreina Benigno-Thomas,



Lynda Milner, John Pettman and Susan Jones in her old school blazer

More pictures overleaf



# A summer of reunions



Current students Roscoe Savage and Zoe Langham with Alistair and Sue Sedman



Remembering the old days: Ruth Ferguson and Julia Whitbread



Rebecca Simpson and Maureen Mence with former boarders Jamie Simpson and Paul Morris, who recall bringing tadpoles into the boarding house, which resulted in it being overrun with frogs



Sharon Thomson, Christine Whittaker, John Kershaw and Carol Starbuck were among those examining displays of old photographs in the library



Organiser Dave Cotson with Robina and Adrian Morgan and Ralph Waggitt and Alan Plumb, who both flew over from the States for the occasion



Old school friends: Sue Potter, Margaret Clough, Chris Marshall and Sharon Milestone



Jane Leney, Ella Benigno, Ben Smith, Therese Howstan and Andreina Benigno-Thomason. Below, the former boarders gather for a photograph after their tours round School House and Johnson House



Former deputy head David Postlethwaite, Suzette Finch and former wood and metalwork teacher John Chambers



Derek Crookes, Martin Hutchinson, Dave Richardson and Malcolm Duckworth at the gathering in the library



Carolynne O'Donoghue, Julia Crossland and Dave Perkins



Nicola Woolfenden (Old Rips), Stephen Swindells and John Rawson



Chris and Janet Tasker with Jane-Riley and Murdoch Gillespie catching up on old times back at their old school

Contact us if your year group is having a reunion and you would like to go back to school:  
[oldriponians@aol.com](mailto:oldriponians@aol.com)



Governors Caroline Bligh, left, and Ruth Campbell, right, with guests at the reunion

TO VIEW MORE PHOTOGRAPHS, PLEASE VISIT THE ALUMNI SECTION ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE. DON'T MISS OUR DEC 17 WINTER REUNION REPORT IN THE NEXT ISSUE



## Tributes



Railwayman: Geoff Bird

## A passion for steam

GEOFF Bird, who died aged 88, was a railwayman whose career spanned wartime, nationalisation, dieselisation and electrification.

His railway career began during the Second World War and lasted 40 years, through nationalisation to the infamous Beeching cuts and the introduction of 125mph services.

Born in Essex, Geoff's family moved to Harrogate when war broke out and he attended Ripon Grammar School until July 1944 when he left to work as a metal-flame cutter and welder constructing rapid assembly temporary Bailey Bridges, made of lattice steel, for the war effort.

The following year, he got his first job on the railways, as an LNER apprentice in Darlington where he started his mechanical engineering training in the fitting and cylinder sections.

He had moved on to the drawing office when the railway was nationalised. After a series of promotions, in 1965 he was appointed shed master at York where he was in charge of 1,000 men and 40 steam locomotives, also going on to run Harrogate and Scarborough depots in 1970.

While at York, he oversaw the end of steam as the old locomotives were replaced by diesel trains. He famously borrowed the inside connecting rod from one of the old Class V2 steam trains, which were built between 1936 and 1944, to use as a footrest under his desk at home.

In 1985, after being in charge of drivers for 33 years, Geoff retired from the railways. His final post was in Doncaster, during which time the southern part of the line was electrified.

Geoff volunteered at the National Railway Museum, providing them with a wealth of knowledge and experience over many decades.

# Music industry pays tribute to top events producer

**F**iona Haycock, one of the British music industry's most highly regarded events managers, who worked on a wide range of prestigious galas and awards ceremonies including the BRIT, MOBO and Sony Radio Awards, has died aged 51 following a battle with cancer.

Fiona, who left Ripon Grammar School in 1983 to read communication studies at Lanchester Polytechnic, helped raise millions of pounds for music business charities.

She was executive producer of the annual Music Industry Trusts (MITS) Award and had been working on the 2016 event, honouring The Who's Roger Daltrey, until shortly before her death. Previous recipients of MITS awards, which Fiona worked on for more than 24 years, include Annie Lennox, Gary Barlow, Kylie Minogue and Sir Tom Jones.

Her work on the Nordoff Robbins charity's Silver Clef Awards, presented to stars including David Bowie, Eric Clapton, Sir Paul McCartney and The Rolling Stones, helped transform the lives of thousands of vulnerable and isolated children and adults across the UK through music.

Director of fundraising and communications for Nordoff Robbins, Jo Carter, said Fiona had

Fiona Haycock helped raise millions for charity through her work in the music industry. She will be remembered for her superb organisational skills, as well as her sense of humour

worked for the charity – the largest independent music therapy charity in the UK – for many years as a highly respected producer, PR and events manager.

Her work had raised millions for this charity alone, she said: "The Nordoff Robbins team are so sad to have lost such a fantastic colleague and friend. Fiona's work on the MITS Award as well as on the Nordoff Robbins events team has allowed us to change countless lives through music therapy."

Fiona also helped raise money for the BRIT Trust: "The impact that her death has had on the wider music industry is testament to her character, professionalism and kindness. Our thoughts are



Enduring legacy: Fiona Haycock made a huge impact on the music industry

with Fiona's family and friends at this sad time. She will be remembered by the team here for her kindness, calmness and her gorgeous smile," added Jo.

Chris Hodgkins, who worked with Fiona for several years on the Parliamentary Jazz Awards, said: "Fiona was a superb organiser, utterly unflappable and, when all around her were losing their heads, Fiona, like a stately galleon, piled on the canvas and moved onward."

"Bound up with her impressive organisational skills was her sense of humour and her endless patience in handling people with egos."

Fiona also worked as director of PR and events

at the record industry trade group, the British Phonograph Industry (BPI) from 1996 to 1999 and as events head at Phonographic Performance Limited from 2009-14.

Gennaro Castaldo, BPI's director of communications, told Clocktower: "Fiona was loved and respected by the huge number of friends and colleagues she worked with across the music industry over the years, and we are all profoundly saddened by her passing."

"Fiona helped to raise millions for music charities through the events she organised, not least for Nordoff Robbins music therapy, and she leaves an enduring legacy that will benefit many families for years to come."

## Author shed new light on past

JOHN Holt was born in April 1930 in Skelton-on-Ure, the son of the headmaster of the village school. He attended Ripon Grammar School from 1941 to 1948.

After RGS, he did two years national service at RAF Ballykelly and then joined Lloyds Bank. He worked at several branches, finally becoming a branch manager in Farnborough.

His interests lay in gardening, caravanning and in old cars.

Having restored a 1929 Morris Cowley saloon over seven years, he attended rallies each year with the Bullnose Morris club.

John, pictured in the RGS 1947-8 rugby team, right, published books about life growing up in the Thirties and Forties in Skelton and his father's experience in the First World War. Profits from his major work, about the history of Skelton-on-Ure, helped fund the restoration of the Skelton First World War Memorial.



## A creative life

JOHN Constable, born in 1947, was Ripon Grammar School's head boy in 1965 and went on to read classics at Wadham College, Oxford. After university, he had a happy and creative life in Germany teaching English and latterly as a translator. He made many very good friends who supported him in his fight with cancer. John is pictured, right, in fifth form in 1964.



## Record breaking sportsman

MICHAEL Newport attended Ripon Grammar School in the 1950s where he excelled in sport. In 1957 he broke the record for the half mile in an impressive time of two minutes and 9.06 seconds. The school magazine singled him out for special mention: "In his fine effort in the half mile, apart from running a powerful and well judged race, he broke a record which stood since 1936."



Michael pictured in the RGS 1956-7 Rugby team

Michael, who was from Harrogate, also played for the school rugby team, where his passion for the sport began. He played for Harrogate Rugby Football Club from 1959 and, when National Service took him to London and the Coldstream Guards, he played for Brigade Guards, London District and London Irish. Over the years, Michael also played for Moseley and Richmond before returning to Harrogate where he played until the age of 53. From March 1969 to April 1972 he played 118 consecutive games for the Harrogate 1st XV. He began and ended his career as a prop forward and was Harrogate club captain from 1969 to 1971. Michael's love and passion for the game continued throughout his life as he took on the role of membership secretary and club chairman during the 1980s.

Michael married Jennifer in 1965 and had two sons, James and Nicholas. He was also a proud Grandpa to Spencer, who now attends Ripon Grammar School. Michael died peacefully at the age of 77 on August 12, 2016. His funeral, at Stonefall Crematorium, Harrogate, on August 31, was a tribute to a fantastic sportsman, respected by all he met.

WE HAVE JUST LEARNED OF THE SAD DEATH OF FORMER HEADMASTER ALAN JONES (RGS 1992-2004). TRIBUTE TO FOLLOW IN THE NEXT EDITION OF CLOCKTOWER



# FEEDBACK

## Your news and views

Write to the editor at: [erc46@btinternet.com](mailto:erc46@btinternet.com)

CONGRATULATIONS on the beautifully produced Clocktower which must surely be one of the very best alumni magazines in the country.

Would it be possible for anyone to identify all the staff members in the photo at the top of the article on pages 24-25 in issue 10 please?

I recognise Messrs Kempster, Sherwood, Budden, Shaw, Burton and the headmaster, but not the others.

Very best wishes,

John Jammes

I JUST want to thank you for a fantastic edition of Clocktower. I thoroughly enjoyed the read and great breadth of news of past pupils. You covered those I'd heard of, but never met, those I was at school with, those I taught and some from my children's era.

Many thanks,

Anne Harrison

I HAVE never been so flattered! Whoever designs/does the layout for Clocktower is something of a genius.



Clocktower issue 10 featuring Dr Paul Hullah on the cover

I love the way the pages look. I don't deserve such support, but I feel closer than ever to RGS as a result of it.

With gratitude,

Dr Paul Hullah

CONGRATULATIONS on a great edition of Clocktower.

I certainly found the articles about people I knew from my time at RGS in the 60s fascinating—particularly as I recently met up with Stephen Orton during his recent concert tour in Japan.

Colin Yarker

CLOCKTOWER looks fantastic. I especially loved reading about my Latin teacher, Mr Lister, and what he's up to now.

Thank you,

Becky Chamberlain

CLEARLY a lot of hard work and research goes into producing so much content. Amazing.

I spotted Mr Garvey's retirement—reminds me of a 'This is Your Life' we did on Garv for charity week years ago.

We had some projected slides that Photoshopped Garv into various famous situations—the first space travel, political scenarios etcetera. A real novelty back in those days! Thanks again,

Mark Hills

THANKS for my issue of Clocktower, it looks really good. Paul Hullah was in the same class as me and we were briefly in a spectacularly awful band together. It seems that he has done well for himself.

Mike Burnett

● Were you in a band at RGS? Please write and tell us about it, and send us some photos.

GOLD  
STAR

DO RGS and Old Rips plus the City Council have any plans yet to celebrate our RGS diver Jack Laughter after his momentous gold and silver medal achievements in Rio? Suggestions, to be added to, include:

- A new diving pool at RGS or Ripon Baths
- A lifetime member certificate from Old Rips, as part of a big RGS celebration day
- A special achievement board in school

I'm sure there will be local Old Rips who would love to sort this out and show everyone's appreciation of Jack's commitment and dedication and for it to act as a shining example of what hard work and commitment can achieve and act as a model for future generations.

I was at RGS from 1957 to 1962.

Chris Barber



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