

SIXTH FORM NEWSLETTER

This term has seen the arrival of new lower sixth students, as well as many teachers and members of staff. There has been an art trip to Edinburgh; the first few university offers, as well as a wide array of impressive extra-curricular achievements from across the sixth form. We hope this half term's newsletter will provide insight into the huge variety of things going on, and be of interest. -Phoebe and Rafaella

WELCOME TO RGS SIXTH FORM

A belated welcome to all the new lower sixth as well as the returning upper sixth pupils for this academic year. After a hectic first half term with lots going on we hope that you are both rested and ready for the run in to Christmas.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all on behalf of the School Officers for your unyielding support and enthusiasm during Charity Week, irrefutably making it the huge success it was and hopefully a week you enjoyed as much as us.

We are the sure this half term and no doubt the rest of the year will continue with the same busy schedule of work and activities. We would like reiterate that at times things may get too much but this happens to the best of us and is not cause for concern. Do remember to ask for help or support though from any member of the sixth form team if you need to, we are all only human, so also take time to enjoy yourself and relax. To use Mr Fell's ever recurring proverb make sure you take as many of the opportunities presented to you so that by the end you will have 'no regrets'.

Sola Sowole and Tom Mewes

CHARITY WEEK

Our annual charity week took place from the 22nd to the 26th of October. This year we chose to support St Michael's Hospice in its amazing work, a charity very close to our pupils' hearts.

Saint Michael's Hospice exists to help people with terminal illness to live and die well through offering specialist care, comfort and support, free of charge, to patients and their families. Our money will go to funding to providing nursing, accommodation and end of life care for the patients.

Charity week opened with a superb performance by Higgys Rascal & Crew and throughout the week activities and performances were held at lunch and break to raise money.

To follow up from Tom and Sola – welcome to all the students who have joined us from other schools this year. As a significant proportion of the year, it is key that as a group you integrate seamlessly into the sixth form. We hope you feel this is being achieved, and after your first half-term at RGS you've become familiar with the school and are now in the position to make the most of your two years here.

Most of you took the opportunity to partake in charity week, and hopefully this has encouraged you to continue to participate in the range of clubs and societies around school. A number of you have already undertaken sport, music or drama, but I would encourage you if you don't already to make the most of what's on offer.

I hope that from here you will only feel more engaged with school life, and a part of sixth form, but if you feel this is not the case, or that your experience joining RGS has not gone as well as you'd like, feel free to talk to me or any one of the sixth form team. We will be holding another brief meeting within the coming weeks anyway to go over any new questions or concerns.

Dan Towler

The highlights of the week included the Chase with a surprising final round, Zorb football where students across years and staff got involved as part of a house competition. Both the School Officer Dance and the Sixth Form Dance Battle were definitely routines to remember as was Friday's impromptu DJ. Whilst Sumo Wrestling and the Obstacle Course provided entertainment for all year groups. As always, the RGS panto, this year Shrek, supplied many laughs.

The school officers would like to thank everyone that took part in charity week, staff and pupils, with the charity Christmas cracker I still to come were looking at a total over £10,000.

George Vivian

MEET THE SIXTH FORM TEAM

Mr Fell

Please could you tell me a fun fact about yourself?

I can wiggle my ears independently.

What is a pet hate of yours?

Rude drivers (not acknowledging when you've let them in, just like people who ignore you when you hold the door open for them); very tiny bark dogs; people saying eccetera rather than etcetera

Are there any common misconceptions about your subject/role that you'd like to set the record straight on?

English – It's not just all about reading
Sixth Form – That we don't notice people slipping out of the back gate at the wrong time of day...

Random Question – Where did you want to travel to when you were young and why?

To the top of the Faraway Tree, to the land of presents, to acquire an aeroplane.

Mrs Fell

Please could you tell me a fun fact about yourself?

I was the only undergrad in my college to have tile grout in my bedroom for an ongoing craft project – I love all crafts.

What is a pet hate of yours?

Using the phrase 'One can ascertain that', and people incorrectly using long words they may or may not understand.

Are there any common misconceptions about your subject/role that you'd like to set the record straight on?

History – It's not all about dates, essay, PEv.
Proper history is about being able to argue and defend your opinion.
Sixth Form – I'm not your mother, but sometimes it feels like I have to be...

Random Question – Describe your favourite colour to a blind person?

It's the visual equivalent of a gin and tonic (coincidentally one of my favourite flavour combinations). Light, refreshing, with a slightly bitter note. Autumnal and warm or sunny and bright. Answers on a postcard please. .

Mrs Dodd

Please could you tell me a fun fact about yourself?

I used to work in a secure unit for criminals with mental health criminals, and was almost strangled by a paranoid schizophrenic.

What is a pet hate of yours?

People who eat with their mouths open and make loud chomping noises.

Are there any common misconceptions about your subject/role that you'd like to set the record straight on?

Psychology – We don't learn how to read peoples' minds. If I could do that, I would be a millionaire in the Caribbean.

Random Question – What animal would you be and why?

A turtle, because they are looked after by conservationists and don't have to deal with their children, as they lay their eggs and swim away, but mainly because they hang out on coral reefs, which as a keen scuba-diver, I would love.

Mrs Griffiths

Please could you tell me a fun fact about yourself?

I used to live in New Zealand and have bungee-jumped. It's my favourite place in the world, and you should go!

What is a pet hate of yours?

People who don't take responsibility for themselves and people who don't say thank you when you hold the door open for them.

Are there any common misconceptions about your subject/role that you'd like to set the record straight on?

That I don't know what students are going through, or that I don't see what they are up to. I have two boys, I know how tough it can be...

Random Question – What has been your most unexpected student experience?

When we ran out of dishwasher tablets, so someone filled the dishwasher with washing up liquid instead. They thought it would be the same, but it was like an Ibiza foam party for a week. Don't try it at home folks!

THE ROYAL FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE

I was recently fortunate enough to be given a ticket to the Royal Festival of Remembrance, alongside Abi Burke; which was held on 10th November in the Royal Albert Hall. The day started at 6am in order to travel by rail down to London, but once at the event all the time on the train seemed inconsequential. The festival itself was incredibly moving, with absolutely fantastic music provided by military bands and artists including Tom Jones. Perhaps my favourite was the cello solo of 'Amazing Grace', which coupled with the stark black and white projections of WW1 footage created a very emotive few minutes. Furthermore, every seat was left with a photograph of a fallen British soldier, which we were invited to hold up as part of the Act of Remembrance. To be surrounded on all sides, above and below, by a sea of such young faces was incredibly powerful, and a memory I will definitely continue to reflect upon.

As a service pupil myself, I felt a real sense of pride during the march on, as well as watching videos of all the fantastic work the Royal British Legion does. The iconic poppy drop that marks the end of the festival finished the event on a climax, and afterwards we were able to walk down into the stage to take photos in front of the drum alter and collect the petals.

Attending the Royal Festival is one of the most memorable things I have done, and it was a real honour and privilege to be given a ticket.

Phoebe Hall



SPORTING SUCCESS

One of our new sixth formers, Abi Smith, studies psychology, PE, geography and biology while continuing with her exceptional sports career. Abi tells us in her own words all about her recent achievements.

When did you get into cycling?

'I've always been a keen on mountain biking from 5 years old, but only began road biking when I started triathlon at the age of 10. I've done triathlon for 5 or 6 years now and only just switched full time to cycling.'

What are your recent achievements?

'I recently got onto the GB Cycling Team Junior Academy for track and road endurance. I got in by coming 2nd at two national road events along with having very high scores on power tests! I've had international success in mountain running and triathlon, coming 6th in Jersey Super League in September representing GB. Now I want to focus on cycling as it is my best and favourite of the disciplines.'

What are you currently working towards?

'With the GB squad, I have got track internationals in January 2019 in Appledorn, Holland. There are also some European road events in spring which I hope to do well in. What I would really love would be to get into the Junior Road World's team, as the Road World Championships are being held in Yorkshire in 2019- it would be amazing to race on 'home turf'!

What do you hope to achieve in the future?

'Currently- absolutely no idea! In an ideal world, the Olympic Road Team, but I'm not sure how likely that is, or where I'll be going after A Levels.'



100 YEARS – COMMEMORATING THE LIVES OF FORMER STUDENTS

On Thursday November 8th, Ripon Grammar School staff and students came together to commemorate the centenary of the ending of the First World War.

The act of remembrance began as School staff, all of the students and a number of invited special guests gathered around the Memorial Stone on the School playing fields

At 10:50 “Abide With Me” was sung by all present, accompanied by the Brass Ensemble, led by Mr Highton. This moving start to the tribute was followed by the offering of prayers by Canon Michael Gisbourne.

After the prayers, Eva Scullion and Hettie Simenacz from third form were joined by Maisie Willis from second form in playing The Last Post.

Wreaths were then placed at the Stone by Head Boy, Thomas Mewes and Sola Sowole, Head Girl. These were laid alongside wreaths from The Old Riponians, offered by Society President Derek Crookes and a wreath from the Wells family.

99 Old Riponians served and died in the 1914-1918 Great War and in World War II. The Wells family’s presence helped offer special memories of Arthur Wells, Old Riponian, who died in action in 1916, aged 22. Arthur joined up aged 20 in 1914 and was killed in the Battle of the Somme. Arthur was one of over 420 000 casualties in this battle alone.

One of five Wells brothers who attended Ripon Grammar School, Arthur and his siblings all volunteered to fight during the Great War. Although Arthur, the eldest was killed, thankfully his younger brothers survived.

Of six million British men mobilised in the Great War over 700 000 were killed. Over 1 in 10 who volunteered died. The presence of the Wells family reinforced both the School’s involvement in the war and the heavy cost of World War I for families in Ripon and across the country.

If conflict happened again on this scale it could mean each form losing 3 or 4 pupils. This sobering and staggering level of loss was in the minds of many as silence began to settle over the fields. Present students considered the sacrifice of their fellow Riponians following the laying of the wreaths as all observed two minutes’ silence at 11:00

As well as the 50 Riponians killed in the Great War, a further 49 perished in World War II and we also remember them.

The Brass ensemble played The Reveille to mark the end of the silence. A dedication was offered by Derek Crookes of the Old Riponians and further hymns sung and prayers said.

Every student placed a single poppy around the memorial stone as part of the ceremony. This was, and remains, a powerful image of both the sadness and the loss that the School suffered in these conflicts and a reminder of all we owe to these brave young people.

Oscar Smith



NAVIGATING SWITZERLAND

After a series of 6 selection races from March -May, Anika Schwarze-Chintapatla was selected as 1 of 4 athletes to run for Great Britain at the Junior Orienteering Cup, in Switzerland; her international debut having just completed her first year training with the GB Talent Squad.

"It was a huge step up from anything I've done before as the intensity of quarantine (pre-race isolation) created new stress levels. Orienteering is a sport relying on speed and navigation in the forest, procedures for international events follow a strict protocol of isolation before races where no technology or contact with other athletes is allowed for the duration before your start time. For late starters, quarantine could last for hours, meaning the races would continue all day."

On arrival in Geneva, embargoed areas prevented direct routes to the hotel, the competition arena was out of bounds to all competitors, coaches, and supporters - trespassing into those areas resulted in automatic disqualification of the whole team from your country.

The competition consisted of: sprint, middle and long- each offering completely different terrain to take on over 3 days of racing, coaching sessions in the evening focused on race recovery and tactical changes in approach to racing in the new terrain we would face



GPS tracking of runners allowed athlete progress followed, creating high intensity for finishers who were watching incoming athletes. Traditionally a difficult spectator sport, the races incorporated spectator loops & the finish was live streamed.

"With this being my first GB competition I was not expecting any results under the top 30 and was planning to try and achieve a 'clean' run that I could be proud of- no mistakes! Being the youngest athlete on the GB team I initially aimed to keep my results as close as possible to my team mates. By the end of the competition however I was incredibly pleased with my best result of the 3 races- 6th place in the sprint!"

Charlie Brown

L6 ART TRIP TO EDINBURGH

The AS art students spent a jam packed four days, led by Mrs Henson, Mrs Howes and Mr Davies, exploring the artistic sights and galleries of Edinburgh and the Mid Lothian. Verity Langdale tells us more:

'We went up on Thursday, stopping at Berwick-upon-Tweed to take photos of the bridge and other pieces of interesting architecture. Once in Edinburgh we stayed in a little hostel a short walk from the centre; going back and forth we could see the castle on the skyline. One of the less arty things we did was go on a ghost walk and into the dungeons, and learnt about superstitions of the Old Town.'

The main point of the trip was gallery visits, which was great as the teachers let us do our own thing and interpret the artists, without their work being filtered to us.'

What was your favourite thing about the trip?

'Frequent stops from the bus to take photos and make sketches, which created a sort of map of the journey and the time we had there.'

And the worst thing?

'The bus driver, who kept insisting on showing us places, then conducting impromptu tours using Wikipedia from his phone whilst in lay-bys!'

Phoebe Hall



For the inaugural Sudoku of Quiz Corner we have a very easy one. Please send your completed answers - printed, paper, electronically, however you want - to Gus Smith (U6A) for the chance to win a **mystery prize!**

1		6			2	3		
	5				6		9	1
		9	5		1	4	6	2
	3	7	9		5			
5	8			2				
			4		8	1	5	7
			2	6			4	
		4	1			6		9
9				7	4	2	1	

We hope you have enjoyed reading our first issue of this year. If you have any articles or events you would like us to cover, please let us know via your form captains.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE!

