

# RGS news

## WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER

### Dear Parents,

Welcome to RGS News. The spring term is always a short one but it does not seem to diminish the quality and quantity of the activities at school. There is plenty of news as usual and I hope you will enjoy reading it.

The reports which have been sent home for the fifth and sixth form make very good reading and I am optimistic about the outcome of the examinations in the summer. Nearly all of the fifth form has applied to come back in the sixth form and there have been over 100 applications from students from other schools. Offers for first form places were made at the beginning of March and once again the school is in a privileged position of being over subscribed at this stage. For the first time fourteen boarding places have been offered too.

I would like to remind you of study leave dates which have been conveyed to you via my spring newsletter, a copy of which is on the school website. The dates are as follows:

Fifth form	Wednesday, 13 May	12.30pm
Lower Sixth	Friday, 15 May	4pm
Lower Sixth return for A2 teaching	Monday, 8 June	
Upper Sixth	Monday, 18 May	12.30pm

The school building programme is referred to in other parts of the RGS News but I am delighted that Houseman and Falshaw have been awarded the contract for the sports hall at a very good price. They are

a local company and have agreed to undertake the work for a cost of just under £700,000, and when you read this they will be on site, commencing building work on March 30th and completing the project around August 24th, the same time as the sixth-form block is due to be completed. The refurbishment of the biology laboratory is due to take place over the summer break and plans for the music block are in the process of being drawn up. Much of this is keeping me rather busy but it is very exciting to think that most of the building work will be completed by the beginning of the new academic year.

I very much enjoyed the musical 'Fame' and would like to congratulate the drama and music departments for such a high quality production.

Thank you for all the support you give the school and I would like to thank the Parents' Association in particular for their commitment and support of the school. They raise significant sums of money each year to support the education provided and just as importantly organise very enjoyable activities such as the May Ball, Burns' Night and Bollywood evening for parents and their guests to enjoy. I hope you will be able to support the Ball in May; and you may wish to join the Parents' Association to help with their work generally. Contact Mr. Tearle via school if you are interested in joining this thriving organisation. The parents association have agreed to found a new school minibus which we hope to take delivery of next term.

I hope you have a very enjoyable Easter and that we can look forward to a warm summer when we return after the break.

Best wishes,

*M L Pearman (Headmaster)*

## GOING TO GREAT LENGTHS!



**Chaos is the first words that springs to mind when you volunteer to help out in primary school swimming galas with 50 children each time in a swimming pool ... and yet the three events went surprisingly smoothly.**

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After signing up for the Sports Leadership Award, a scheme designed to encourage and lead sports within the local community, ten lower-sixth students, admittedly rather sceptically to begin with, signed up to help Mrs Mackenzie run the events. Each Wednesday in February, pupils in years 1 to 6 from seven local primary schools met at our swimming pool. The aim was to encourage exercise and supportive interaction in non-competitive swimming races.

Not only did the primary schools enjoy their cheering, chanting and singing on top of their swimming, but so did we! Their enthusiasm and enjoyment was infectious. Despite our seemingly mundane tasks of



stop-watch duty (which still seemed a bit of a problem for the boys to grasp!) and recording times, we found a lot of enjoyment in them and soon realised we had small, but important roles. They also helped us practise important social and communication skills with one another, teachers and children; skills which are much needed for the course.

The days taught us that you can gain a lot of satisfaction from helping out in an overwhelmingly humid swimming pool for a worthwhile cause.

*Frances Shaw, lower sixth*



# OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE HOPEFULS!

The following pupils have received a conditional offer from Oxford and Cambridge Universities:

Lillian Duffield	St Edmund Hall, Oxford	Geography
Samantha Bell	Brasenose College, Oxford	English Literature
Benedict Clancy	Emmanuel College, Cambridge	Natural Sciences

I wish them well over the coming months as they prepare for their A2 examinations and seek to meet their conditional offers. My thanks to staff who have taught and prepared them over the years.

*M. L. Pearman, Headmaster*



# LEAGUE TABLE SUCCESS!

The publication of league tables on Thursday 15 January brought very good news. I was delighted with the GCSE and A Level results when they were published last summer, but the news that the school finished 21st out of all state schools in the whole country at A Level, when students were ranked on the number of UCAS points achieved per student, was very pleasing. Each student scored an average of 1094.7 points (an A grade is worth 270 points). This figure placed Ripon Grammar School 42nd in the whole country when independent schools were included too, placing us ahead of Eton! Ripon Grammar School was ranked second in North Yorkshire on this measure.

The GCSE results place Ripon Grammar School second in North Yorkshire with each student scoring 556 points on average (an A\* grade is worth 48 points). Although statistics don't tell the full story about a school, it is gratifying that students are doing themselves, and the school, proud in these very important public examinations. My thanks go to the students and, of course, the staff for their support and encouragement of the students over many years.

*M. L. Pearman, Headmaster*

# FUTURE INTENTIONS



As our upper sixth form pupils prepare for their forthcoming A2 examinations, we asked a few of them what their intentions were for the next academic year. As you can see, their plans are varied!

I decided to take a gap year as a break from studying, examinations and routines. I am currently planning (and saving for) my year out in the Darjeeling area, on the border of India and Nepal. When in Darjeeling I will be teaching in a secondary school for the children of Ghurkhas. As lessons there are taught in English, this will allow me to teach mathematics and science.

After my gap year I am planning to study physics, hopefully at Imperial College, London. I enjoy physics as it is fundamental, and applies to everything without exception; by applying mathematical models to the world around us we can gain a deeper understanding of how things work.

*Seth Nabarro*

The music curriculum diversified two years ago when the sixth form pupils were given the chance to take not only music at A level but also music technology and I have taken both subjects along with physics. I have been offered a conditional place at Huddersfield University to take a BMus degree in Creative Music Technology. This is a unique course; for half of the time I will be learning to work creatively with technology whilst developing an understanding of the principles underlying the software and hardware. The other half will be spent studying music, in particular performance, which will allow me to develop further my trumpet skills. Graduate opportunities range from working as a music producer or composer, to post-production studio work, or as a film composer and arranger; teaching is also a possibility!

*Oliver Norman*

I had always considered applying to Oxford, but I wasn't sure if it was the right place for me, so I went on a three-day visit with the school. I visited both the geography and chemistry departments and that is what made me apply for geography there. I was inspired by the work that the students had done and could see myself doing similar things. I was also impressed with the course at Oxford which did not separate physical and human geography, but concentrated on the interaction between them. The course also seemed to be up to date with current geographical issues. The school has been very supportive of those applying to Oxbridge – everyone was given practice interviews – but also encourages you to go to the best place for you. I ended up also applying to Bristol, Durham and St Andrews, each of which I had visited. I was impressed by them all and felt I could be happy there, so when I was invited to interview at Oxford I was in a fairly relaxed mindset; I felt that if they wanted me then they would give me a place and if they didn't I was perfectly happy to go somewhere else. When I was offered a place I couldn't believe it! I intend to go with a view to working in the environmental or energy sector in the future.

*Lillian Duffield*

I am currently in the upper sixth at school and studying for my A2 Levels in English literature, theatre studies and religious studies. I have received conditional offers from four of my chosen universities to study primary education. I have made York St John my firm choice and hope to attend there this September in order to begin my course to become a primary teacher. I really enjoy the sixth form and I will be sorry to leave. However, I am very excited by the prospect of starting at university and beginning my journey to become a teacher.

*Gillian Heath*

# BUILDING A FUTURE

**What a difference a week makes. Ripon Grammar School pupils returned from their February half-term break to find the flat and empty site behind the mathematics and engineering block transformed into a gleaming matrix of steel girders. This was the framework for the school's new sixth form block, the construction of which was barely hindered by Ripon's January snowfall. The project remains on schedule for completion on August 24th, just in time for the start of the new academic year in September.**

At one point, work on the site ground to a halt as original developers Lotus succumbed to the financial crisis. Caddick Construction has now taken over the contract and the site is once again a flurry of activity.

The new block, the facilities in which will be shared with sixth-form students at Ripon College, will house three classrooms, a couple of laboratories, an engineering room and a performing-arts area. Study and social facilities for sixth formers will also be greatly improved by a new E-learning centre equipped with computers, a designated study area, and an exclusive sixth-form café, with adjoining patio for fair-weather lunches.

The head teacher at Ripon College, Mr. Barry Found, said, "I am delighted that at last the two schools can share the new state of the art resources which the new joint sixth-form block will offer. It will send a clear message to Ripon that we are serious about providing the learners of Ripon with curriculum choice for all, housed in facilities which are second to none."

Commenting on the new performing arts area, a drama and theatre studies student in the lower sixth said, "The theatre course offered to the sixth form is fantastic, but requires more rehearsal space than we currently have. The prospect of this changing next year is exciting for everyone interested in drama, and presents an opportunity for students to reach their full potential".



Sports fans will also be pleased with the news that, at the time of writing, work on the site of the new sports hall was on the verge of commencing. It was predicted that construction would begin on the 30th March, after the initial foundation survey and excavation had taken place. The sports hall is a quick-build 22-week project, with the predicted completion date again in August. The build involves the 'red gras' hockey pitch being reduced in length to about 95m, still within the limits for a county size hockey surface. A future project will be the conversion of the surface to 'Astro-turf'.

The sports hall will be a superb facility for a wide range of indoor sports, including five-a-side football, netball and cricket practice. There will also be a classroom for the new A-level P.E. course, and gym equipment to include a running machine for students wishing to keep fit. Ripon Grammar School continues to evolve, and clearly these buildings will be fantastic additions to our current facilities.

*Giles Pitts, Editor's Assistant*



## AMP AWARDS AND YOUNG ENTERPRISE



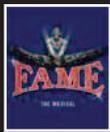
Over the past year the Young Enterprise scheme has been manifest in the form of "Umbrella and co", a business founded on ethical values, promoting fair-trade and supporting and organising community projects. The AMP awards provided a perfect opportunity to present the business and support the local community; the AMP awards scheme gives young and upcoming bands a chance to play in front of an audience of over 1000 people. The winners of the Ripon Grammar School Battle of the Bands, Antar, played a brilliant set which received a standing ovation from their Ripon supporters. The awards began with an interview with Laura Holmes who

outlined the business, which sold programmes and opened a fair-trade tuck-shop on the night. Umbrella and Co received an honourable mention at judging and the "Antar" chants could still be heard whilst the other bands played. Overall the evening was a great success giving the new Young Enterprise team a chance to present their business idea before the regional heats in June, so watch out for the umbrella!

*Alex Gerrity, Editor's Assistant*



# FAME! – BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE SENIOR MUSICAL



It is apt that the opening number of Fame is entitled 'Hard Work'. Not only does it sum up the effort required to master a ten-minute musical medley, involving tricky harmonies and choreographed dance breaks, but it is a reminder of the attitude necessary for creating a slick and sparkling senior production. There was much to be anticipated in this show, which aimed to be more than a match for previously successful senior musicals including Grease in 2007, and before that Guys and Dolls.

Many months of practice and preparation have been put in to produce a show that ran for only three nights, and if evidence of any 'Hard Work' was necessary, a look around the doors of the school hall on a Thursday evening would have been more than adequate. Under Mr Fell's direction, the music of Miss Jackson and Mr. Lancaster, and the choreography of Miss Raymer and Mr. Andrew, the stage was full of the bustle of lead roles and chorus, clad in a combination of school uniform and costume, not forgetting the occasional sweat-band or leg-warmer.

Fame's requirement for a range of talents – singing, acting and dancing – and the sheer joy and energy of the production, resulted in a well-knit cast and many a fun-filled rehearsal. A trip to Manchester to see the touring production in February narrowly avoided cancellation due to the snow-bound Pennines, and was an inspirational evening for all. No doubt the 'Hard Work' paid dividends. Fame played from 25th-27th March, and a review will appear in the summer edition.

*Giles Pitts, Editor's Assistant*



## IN THE LIMELIGHT

On 19 December, Blasted Productions took our short play 'E for Apple' to premiere at Harrogate Theatre, in order to raise money for our impending trip to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this summer. The evening consisted of a raffle, two short 'A Cappella' sets from two of our singers (Abbie O'Neill and Gillian Heath), the performance of 'E for Apple' and an after-show discussion. Overall, the night was a huge success and we raised nearly £300. Following this, the cast and crew requested that we took it further. We will be performing 'E for Apple', along with the premiere of our newest play, 'Something Blue' – a farce about a sadomasochistic maid-of-honour featuring Melissa Draper and Christie Whincup – during the first week of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. We are currently in discussion with venues and have received extremely positive responses. We hope to confirm our specific venue within the coming weeks, whilst continuing with our fundraising.

In other news, we recently received feedback from the prestigious Royal Court Theatre, London. This took us by surprise as we sent them our script over half a year ago. They commented that they were "impressed by the quality ... the scope ... the ambition ... the confidence" of our writing and that we have a "strong grasp of visual comedy and sardonic humour". We hope that our skills as writers continue to develop as we mature and graduate from our two-year course with 'The Writing Squad'.

If you would like to follow our progress or see more about our plays, please visit us at [www.blastedproductions.com](http://www.blastedproductions.com). We would also like to take this opportunity to thank both the school for their support, and all who donated to our raffle in December.

*John May and Sam Bell, upper sixth*

## REBELS WITH A GOOD CAUSE



If you've ever spent time in a hospital, you will no doubt have experienced the delights that hospital radio can bring to your bedside. Beethoven, Sinatra, Humperdinck: what more could a patient want? If you're at death's door, hospital radio will pull you through.

This is where I come in, along with trusty sidekicks Giles Pitts and Amy Barrett. We provide the antidote to hospital radio programming as volunteers on Harrogate Hospital Radio. Our show, Rebel Radio – the sum-total of HHR's

designated kids' output – is broadcast live from 2-till-4 on a Saturday afternoon across the hospital from studios located deep in its bowels.

We aim to keep the show natural and it maintains a conversational feel, along the lines of the successful 'Morning Zoo' format pioneered in the US during the 1980s, but in the afternoon. Whilst the two hours on air are brilliantly energetic, a lot more work goes into a show than might first be apparent.

Throughout the week we need to be doing our background research by following what's going on in the music world. It's important for us to know what music's popular and what's going on in the charts so that we hit the nail on the head with our track selection.

I arrive groggy-eyed at about 12.30pm to start prepping; first stop is a quick trip to the children's ward to collect requests. Amy and Giles arrive later and we need to do microphone checks. When the news finishes at three minutes past two, I hit the button and we go live. There's no break from then until four o'clock, when we hand over to the next show. The whole thing is quite a rush from start to finish.

It is also the most rewarding project I have been involved in to date and it offers a fantastic skill base. Does a career in radio beckon? Well, let's not get too excited just yet!



*Benedict Clancy, upper sixth*

## BRITISH SCHOOLS' BIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIPS



On Sunday November 23rd a group of eleven students from all year groups set off to the John Charles Centre in Leeds for the Yorkshire qualifying round of the British Biathlon Championships. For students in the first, second and third years the event consisted of a 50m swim followed by a 1000m run whereas the

swim distance for the older students was 100m. It was a cold day but the setting was perfect and there were some good performances in both the pool and on the track. The girls ran first whilst the boys swam and then it was all change after lunch. The top six athletes in each year group qualified for the National Finals which are to be held in Wolverhampton in the new year.

There were three competitors in the first year boys age category and this was enough to enter the team event as well as the individual category. George Foster provided the performance of the day coming joint third with twins Harry and Charlie Yates coming in seventh and ninth respectively. Overall, the boys were placed first and go through to the National Finals as Yorkshire's top team.

In the second year category, Alex Speight came third with James Woolfenden putting up a creditable performance to come in ninth place in (spite of a broken thumb in a plastercast!). Ines Wivell represented the fairer sex and came in twelfth. In the third year category Sophie Glover came in tenth place following a brilliant swim. Becky Owram won the 'Best Swim' award for her age category and managed to pull off fourth place, thus qualifying for the finals. David



James came fifth in both his swim and his run and was placed fifth overall, again qualifying for the finals.

Our sixth form representatives were Maddie Wivell who came in seventh and

Tim Robinson who was placed twelfth after a faulty start in the swim set him back 40 points.

It was a long day as we had to register at 9.00 am and didn't leave Leeds until the presentations were over at 4.30 pm but what a fabulous performance from all of our students with Ripon Grammar School being represented by four individuals and one team in the National Finals. Well done everyone!

*Mrs H Mackenzie*

## COUNTY RUGBY SUCCESS



Ripon Grammar School's rugby prowess was highlighted by the news that second year Scott Ogilvie, third years Glenn May and Ben Nabarro, and fourth year George Hobson have achieved places in their respective age-groups' Yorkshire rugby squads.

Ben Nabarro, who plays at scrum-half, and Glenn May, a speedy winger, attended six trials at local rugby grounds including York, Northallerton and West Park, Leeds where they were observed by county coaches in a series of training drills and matches. After playing alongside some of the county's most promising young players and consistently impressing the Yorkshire selectors, they will now line up for their county in forthcoming fixtures. Stars of the school's under-14 side, with Glenn May scoring five tries in the team's first fixture of 2009, both players are also involved at Ripon Rugby Club.

Scott Ogilvie plays as a forward for the school under-13 side and George Hobson is a robust and versatile forward, captain of the school's under-15's, and has also played for the under-16 side. These achievements add to that of Sam Watkinson, fly-half for the 1st XV, who played at Yorkshire under-18 level earlier this year. Congratulations and best of luck to these sportsmen.

*Giles Pitts, Editor's Assistant*

## BOYS' HOCKEY CLUB



It's one o'clock on a wet and windy lunchtime in February and, as Mrs. Porter-Grainger sets up the equipment needed for the training session, a group of boys jog down to the 'red gras'. This is the second year boys' hockey club, which started on the 8th December and, after a few early teething problems such as choosing a convenient day, is now fully up and running.

Second year Dean Porter-

Grainger, the team's captain, has played hockey since he was ten, but realised when he arrived at Ripon Grammar School that there was no opportunity for keen male hockey players to train together. When his mum, a hockey fan since her school days, started working at the school, she asked if she could set up a club for boys who wanted to take up the sport. Initial interest was very high, with about one third of the second year boys signing up.

After a light jog around the expansive playing surface, battling against gusting winds, the boys start a dribbling practice with strict instructions not to shoot at goal! The first thing, according to Mrs. Porter-Grainger, is to get the boys to work together as a team. Then they will be ready to represent the school against other sides – the difficulty being finding other schools that run hockey for the boys as well as the more traditional rugby or football. Competitive fixtures are planned for the future, including a match against the boys' team from Thirsk School.

Eventually the group gathers for a team photo, before rushing off to continue their practice. Although this club started as a trial, it is a clear success, and Mrs. Porter-Grainger is already planning to start running equivalent sessions for first-year boys. Again the idea seems to have taken off, with twenty four first years already expressing an interest. With this level of enthusiasm, surely the club will continue to flourish, and we wish them every success for the future.

*Giles Pitts, Editor's Assistant*

## BEN'S UPS AND DOWNS!



Ben Moorhouse in the upper-sixth form has recently started the 2009 season in his chosen sport of downhill mountain bike racing. This involves hurtling down a mountainside on a bike at break-neck speed over roots and jagged rocks, twisting through narrow gaps in trees, with the aim of reaching the finishing line in the fastest time.

Downhill mountain bike racing is not for the faint hearted. It's a sport which takes him all over the UK and this summer he is travelling across the world to spend time training and racing in Whistler, Canada. With a current national ranking of third in the junior category, Ben is well on the way for a good result in 2009.

Whilst racing on his bike Ben also works towards his A-levels and has recently been accepted at Askham Bryan College near York to study Arboriculture.

For more information visit [www.benmoorhouse.co.uk](http://www.benmoorhouse.co.uk)

# MATTHEW'S A SMASH AT BADMINTON!



**Matthew Clare has had a great start to the new year, as he attempts to fulfil his ambition of representing England at his chosen sport, badminton.**

Following a successful first season playing on the official Badminton England (BE) junior tournament circuit, which saw him win a silver medal at the national championships, and attain second spot in his national age group ranking, Matthew was given a trial in the national squad, commencing last September.

Matthew, like all players selected to join the BE "World Class Programme", was required to submit details of his training programme for approval by national squad coaches. With specified minimum levels of on-court practice, tournament play, and a fitness programme designed to develop core strength and stability, Matthew attends Leeds Metropolitan University three nights each week in order to practise his racquet skills, and improve on his speed around the court.

Tennis' Andy Murray has received much publicity for his fitness work recently, but it's generally not appreciated that at the highest level, studies have shown that the speed and stamina required for badminton are far greater than for any other racquet sport. A comparison of the 1985 Wimbledon men's tennis final, where Boris Becker defeated Kevin Curren 6-3, 6-7, 7-6, 6-4, with that same year's World Men's Badminton final, revealed that the

badminton players competed for half the time, yet ran twice as far and hit nearly twice as many shots. Badminton players need quick reactions too, with some shots officially timed in excess of 200 mph.

Since the turn of the year, there has been good evidence that all the hard work has been paying off for Matthew. At the start of February he achieved a clean sweep of the singles, doubles, and mixed-doubles titles at the Yorkshire Under 12 championships. He followed this up with a bronze medal at the BE Under 13 Gold tournament in Leigh, which was a fine achievement in a tournament with entries from all over Britain, and including players from the age group a year above Matt. Best of all, he returned



from the Leigh tournament to find a letter from BE confirming his selection to represent England at a multinational tournament in Belgium during the forthcoming Easter holidays.

RGS may not have been noted for its badminton teams historically, but with Matthew, a great new sports facility on the way, and another county player destined to join next year's first form intake, we could well put this right in the years ahead!

*Mr C Clare*

## SCHOOL COUNCIL UPDATE

**This term the school council has been working on three major projects: summer dresses, lunchtime silent study and the school's environmental credentials. It's been a term of work-in-progress, rather than one where we've been able to produce tangible results, but hopefully the effort put in now will become apparent in the summer.**

The decision was made earlier in the term to focus purely on the environment sub-committee for the time being, as there was a feeling that trying to co-ordinate three sub-committees was overly ambitious. It was decided that it would be much more effective if focus was placed on the environment sub-committee to work on providing recycling facilities around school and to identify further areas to improve the school's green-rating.

The council has also been working on an initiative to provide space for supervised silent study at lunchtimes after it was noted by members of the council that this would be welcomed by the student body. A room has been found – the boy boarders' dining room – and a proposal for the senior leadership team drawn up. The room will be supervised by prefects and is due to be available from early next term.

Finally, the objectives of one of the council's long-term proposals are soon to come to fruition. For well over a year, the idea of making a summer dress available to girls has been on the council's agenda. Thanks to Laura McCarthy's hard work liaising with manufacturers and retailers during her term of office last year, only some minor administrative efforts on the matter were needed from this year's council. Orders have been placed and hopefully the dresses will arrive ready for when the sun is out in full force.

The council is, as ever, looking for more projects for next term and beyond. If any students have suggestions they should speak to their year's representative.

### SUMMER DRESS

Due to popular demand the Ripon Grammar school girls' summer uniform has been updated. A group of students designed the new dress which can be ordered now. Please see the school's website for more details.



## SUMMER PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



**Have you got a picture you think should make the front page?**

Due to the success of the biology photography competition, RGS News has decided to continue this and begin a competition for front page spot on the summer edition of RGS news! At the end of each term a new theme will be

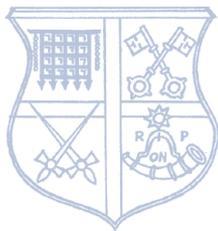
announced and the most original and creative approach will win a place on the front page. Please give your images to Mrs Stevens on a CD/ virus checked USB, or email to [stevensf@ripongrammar.co.uk](mailto:stevensf@ripongrammar.co.uk),

along with a sentence on what inspired you to take the photograph. The closing date for entries is by 10th June and the winner will be immortalised on the front page of the summer edition!

Each theme will relate to an event during that term and so the theme for the summer edition of RGS news is: **FAME!**

Good luck and get snapping!





**President: Paul Freeman**  
**Treasurer: Tony Ellender**  
**Joint Secretaries: Alison Frankland and Louise Watson**

# OLD RIPONIANS' ASSOCIATION

**November 2008** A highly successful concert was held in the school to celebrate the life of Brian Stanley, former Headmaster. The RGS Big Band performed in its usual highly successful and professional way in the first half and was much appreciated by an audience, many of whom had not heard them play before. The rest of the programme contained a variety of 'words and music' demonstrating both Brian's taste and skill in those areas and his commitment to improving the quality of both during his time at the school.

Former pupils, parents, staff, both present and former, either were on the stage or in the audience, along with Mrs. Stanley and members of her family. Unfortunately because of illness, we had to manage without the input of Robert Green, former Head of Music, but were fortunate to entice Phillip Miles, Head of Music in 1974 when Brian Stanley came to the school. He put together a choir to perform a piece from Gilbert and Sullivan's 'HMS Pinafore.' The whole evening was a great success and much enjoyed by all, both performers and audience.

Over £600 was donated, which, after expenses had been deducted was divided between the Stroke Association, Marie Curie Cancer Care and RGS Music Department. All three wrote to the ORA thanking them for the donations.

**December 2008** The ORA joined in the celebrations when the school reached their total of a million pounds for the Sports Hall. We were pleased that not only were we represented on the Fundraising Board, but that many former pupils, former staff and indeed the Association itself made donations large and small to help reach the marvellous total. We look forward to seeing the Hall in use by September 2009.

**ORA Open Day** Since there has been an unavoidable delay in beginning the building of both the Sixth-Form Centre and the Sports' Hall, we have decided to postpone our Open Day from July 2009 to December 19th 2009. This will be the annual Old Riponians' Day but we will extend its usual format with tours round the site to see all the new buildings and improvements as well as, refreshments, music, hockey and rugby matches. It is intended to mark this special day by playing the hockey match between the school and an Old Rips team in the Sports Hall. More details later.

## IN MEMORY OF C W KENT



One of the first tasks which the builders of the new sixth-form block had to perform was to remove a memorial stone from the orchard area. This was dedicated to C W Kent who died from influenza on Good Friday in 1895. Aged about forty six, Christopher Kent had joined the school as a resident master not long after the school moved to the present site in the 1870s. He taught drawing and taught, or assisted with, athletics.

Such was the esteem in which Mr Kent was held that, within a month of inviting subscriptions towards a memorial, over £80 had been raised – a tremendous amount of money at a time when the headmaster's annual salary was probably about £400. A balance sheet printed in The Riponian indicates that the stone itself cost £5-16s-0d (£5.80). After expenses the remaining £80-5s-0d (£80.25) paid for a Memorial Fives Court - fives being a game similar to squash played with a gloved hand. Mr John H Richmond says that when he joined the school as a pupil in the late 1940s the court was out of use and out of bounds. It was situated somewhere in the region of the present reception area but was pulled down in the 1950s.

The lower part of the stone has weathered so much that the inscription is no longer legible. Thanks to Mrs Matthew we have a translation of the upper part from the Latin which reads:

"For more than sixteen years master of Ripon School. Died 12th April 1895".

Currently the stone is lying on a patch of grass not far from where the fives court was located. We hope that it can be re-sited in the near future close to where it was found.

*Mrs G Hills*

# Parents' Association

## SPRING PRIZE DRAW

**This year's Spring Prize Draw should prove very interesting to anyone with a sporting interest, so be sure to look out for tickets, which will have been put through your letterbox already. The first prize this year is a massive 42" plasma screen TV – great for watching the 2012 Olympics!**

Four tickets to watch Liverpool v Newcastle at Anfield on Saturday 2 May is the second prize – so it may be worth keeping this date open in your diary, just in case you're the lucky winner!

As third prize, 'Pursuit of Potential' have kindly donated a family ticket for an action-packed outdoor-pursuits day, to include your choice of adventure sports such as archery, canoeing or rock climbing.

If none of these excellent prizes tickle your fancy, then a guided tour of Liverpool Football Club and entry into the club museum for four people is our magnificent fourth prize!

Tickets will be available from the school office for anyone desperate to get their hand on one of these terrific prizes. The draw takes place on 22 April, so be sure to get your stubs in early and good luck!

## BURNS' NIGHT



On January 24th 120 parents celebrated the 250th anniversary of the death of Robert Burns. Guests were welcomed by a piper resplendant in highland attire. The meal of haggis, neeps and tatties and home-made puddings kindly made by the parent's association was enjoyed by all. The haggis was piped in and solemnly addressed by Mr Harry Johnson. The reply was brilliantly sung by Mr Bob Simpson. Finally everyone was persuaded to dance the evening away with the excellent Twiddling Thumbs ceilidh band.

An enjoyable evening was had by all and the sum of £1,469 was raised for school. Thank you to all who supported the evening. Tickets for the 2010 evening will go on sale in November.

## GRAND MAY BALL

**Saturday 16 May 2009** in the grounds of the school.

Three course dinner by Lockwoods and dancing to the live music of 'Fine and Mellow' and the school band.

**Tickets £45**, sold on a first-come first-served basis.

Please return your request form with full remittance via the school office.

**Tickets are now on sale! For ticket information contact Sandra Bates on 07764570612 or Craig Scorer during office hours on 01765 602085.**

# In Brief

## First-Form Careers Work

After Easter first-form pupils will be looking at how skills learned in school relate to the world of work. They will be focussing especially on numeracy and how this is applied both at work and in our daily lives. This will culminate in a Careers in Mathematics Event to be held in school on Tuesday 19 May. Pupils will have the chance to attend workshops run by representatives from a range of companies and will experience first hand how mathematics can be used to solve problems at work.

## School Nurse

Hello everyone! I'm Jo Spence, your new school nurse. I just wanted to introduce myself to you all, as you may see me around school. As a school nurse, I aim to promote the health and well-being of all school age young people. I will be running a Health Drop-In every Wednesday in the



Sanatorium 12 – 2pm, where I can give support and advice on healthy lifestyles, mental health, sexual health, smoking cessation, drugs and alcohol. I'm very friendly and all that is discussed in the Health Drop-In remains confidential, unless I have concerns that you may be at risk or harm (which would be discussed). I'll look forward to meeting you! PS. Look out for the posters promoting the Health drop-In!

## Welcome to Mel!



My name is Melvin Greene and I am the new GAP student from Wellington, New Zealand. I come to Ripon Grammar School with the knowledge that my brother, Sam Greene, the GAP student in 2007, gained heaps of experience by working over here. I am an assistant in the PE department. I will also be helping with the boys' and girls' football and boys' cricket. This year I'll also be working in the boys' boarding house. This is a new experience for me and I'm looking forward to passing my football and cricket skills on to the pupils and the PE department.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### April

13 – 23	French Exchange in France
20	School opens
23	Battle of the Bands
25 – 26	Upper-sixth form biology revision weekend

### May

1	School closed
4	School closed for May Day
7	Leavers' concert, 7pm
10	Boarders' summer tea, 4pm
13 – 15	Third year summer examinations
16	Parents' Association Summer Ball, 7pm
18 – 22	Fourth year work experience
19	First year Careers in Maths day
22 – 24	Second year RE trip to London
22	School closes for half term

### June

1	School opens
8	A2 teaching begins
10 – 19	Fourth year summer examinations
15 – 19	First and second year summer examinations
15 – 19	Lower sixth work experience
16 – 17	Third year newspaper project
27 – 30	Junior production dress rehearsals
30	Sixth-form biology field trip to Malham

### July

1	Sports day
2 – 4	Junior production, 7pm
6	New first year welcome evening, 6.30pm
7	New first year induction day
8	Open evening for first year intake 2010
10	Staff training day
15	Lower school prize-giving, 2pm
16	Sponsored walk
17	Commemoration service, 11am School closes 12.30pm

## FROM THE EDITOR...

This edition I have some goodbyes and welcomes to bid! Firstly, we must say 'au revoir' to my outgoing Assistant Editor, Benedict Clancy, who has worked tirelessly in all of his roles both within the school and out, and managed to offer an enormous amount of help to me with regards to the newsletter as well – quite an achievement! I would like to take this opportunity to wish Benedict, and all of our hard-working upper-sixth pupils, whom I have known since they were eleven years old, the very best of luck with their future intentions.

A welcome, therefore, to the TWO new Editor's Assistants (note the job-title change), Giles Pitts and Alex Gerrity, who have already proved their weight in gold! I look forward to a very productive year with my new team!

As ever, if any pupil, staff member or parent should be interested in writing an article for the next edition of RGS News, or suggesting content, please contact me or get in touch on [stevensf@ripongrammar.co.uk](mailto:stevensf@ripongrammar.co.uk).

I hope you enjoy reading this edition! Watch out for a bumper edition in the summer term.

Mrs F Stevens

For further information please contact us:

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