

House Drama

One of the highlights of the month of November is the House Drama competition

Art trip to Paris

The upper-sixth form artists visited Paris for four days

Speech Day 2013

The group who took their A levels this summer contributed to the best results ever at Ripon Grammar School

Issue 36 Autumn 2013

RGS News



Boulevard Noel by Annabel Robinson U6B



Specialist Schools
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EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY



Parents

A very warm welcome to the Autumn edition of the RGS News. This has been a long, fifteen-week term full of highlights.



It was excellent to see so many former students back in school for Speech Day to listen to Mark Damazer, CBE, Master at St Peter's College and former Controller of Radio 4, who gave an eloquent address which captivated the audience.

The standard of House Drama was incredibly high this year and my congratulations go to De Grey for their production of 'The Secret Garden' and winning House Drama in 2013.

I am delighted to report the appointment of Mr Auger as new Deputy Headteacher, to succeed Mr McGrann from September 2014. There was an excellent field over two days of interview. A very warm welcome to the new members of staff who started in September; you will be able to read

about them in this edition. They have made a very impressive start and have settled into Ripon Grammar School very well. The vacancy for the Assistant Headteacher position created by Mr Auger's appointment, the Head of mathematics and the Director of music posts will be advertised early in the Spring term.

It is unusual to report that there will be no January modules after Christmas, which emphasises the importance of ensuring that all students work consistently over the coming months. It will also mean a very hectic schedule of examinations for fifth and sixth form students in the summer, so they will need to be exceptionally well organised in their revision in order to be successful. I am sure they are fully aware of the challenge that this change of arrangements will bring.

We are currently advertising for year 9 entry for September 2014, with nine day places and four boarding places being available. The entrance examinations will be on Saturday morning, 8 February 2014.

I am very much looking forward to the senior production of 'Les Misérables' in March 2014. There will be performances on Tuesday, 18 March, Wednesday, 19 March, Thursday, 20 March and Friday, 21 March 2014 and tickets will be on sale shortly after Christmas. I would expect this production to be a 'sell-out' and I hope that you will be able to purchase your tickets as soon as possible. The Parents' Association have kindly accepted the task of ticket sales and details will follow shortly.

The plans for the classroom block are now well advanced and it appears that the start of the project is now brought forward to February half term, when the huts and the old caretaker's bungalow will be removed from the site. This will enable the foundation work to occur sooner than planned. The reason for this change in schedule is to ensure the building will be available for use in September 2014. As a consequence of this, some temporary classroom room units will need to be brought on site, to be sited near the Sports Centre, to replace the huts which are being permanently removed. Once the building is complete, these TCUs will then be removed also. I will keep you informed of the developments as they progress.

The elevation of the building is outlined in the sketch below.

All in all, a very busy and exciting time ahead.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a restful New Year.

Yours sincerely

M L Pearman (Headmaster)



2013 School Leavers

In June this year the pens hit the desk and a sigh of relief swept across the gymnasium as last year's upper sixth's A-level examinations came to a close. After the initial excitement of the end of their school careers, the students now had the difficult wait until August for their results. They would then discover what the future held, at least for the next few years.

The university applications for the year group had, as is always the case at Ripon Grammar School, been very ambitious but thanks to a lot of hard work during their school careers the vast majority of students were proud of, and pleased with, their results, and no doubt had a wild night or two to celebrate! The success of the students is reflected in the large number of university places achieved by the group, with nine students now studying at Oxbridge universities. The most popular universities for last year's leavers appeared to be in the north and north-east, with twenty eight students studying in Newcastle, Sheffield or Durham. Eight students have chosen Scottish universities whilst nine have gone to London.

Many of the courses chosen appear to be extremely difficult, yet hugely intriguing, with many students opting for scientific subjects with high workloads. Seven of the students have pursued courses in biomedical science, whilst three are studying the challenging philosophy, politics and economics, including the year's Head Boy, Hugh McHale-Maughan. The former Head Girl, Georgina

Sanderson, has joined Hugh at Oxford and is studying medicine, and we all wish her the best of luck given the huge amount of work required. There has been a great diversity of courses chosen; Malcolm Pope is studying screenwriting, Elizabeth Tearle has elected to study archaeology and anthropology and Samuel Easton chose international relations with Chinese, which, given the emergence of China as a global superpower, will surely open doors for him in his future career.

Of course, not all students have opted to go to university which, given the economics of modern Britain, could prove to be a shrewd decision. Highly sought-after programmes and courses have been secured by ex-students at HSBC, Barclays and the biotechnological firm Syngenta, and great commendation ought to go to the students for putting their first foot on the employment ladder. The year group are rightly very proud and satisfied and they deserve the best of wishes as they take the next step towards their adult lives.

Nick Edwards, L6C

House Drama

Here at Ripon Grammar School, one of the highlights of the month of November is the House Drama competition. This is a completely student-run event, in which members from each house have nine weeks to put together a production to be performed for a paying audience. In previous years the standard has always been very high, and this year was no exception.

Thursday 14th November was a night for the comic actors in our midst, as both Hutton and School put on two brilliantly funny productions, filled with some fantastic one-liners and golden comedy moments.

Hutton began the night with their production of *Shrek*, directed by Charlotte Kessell and Emily Ramsden, starring James Riley as Donkey and Max Morrison as the ogre himself. This production really captured the fairy-tale feel of the film beautifully, overcoming the obvious challenges presented by creating various magical creatures (Lucinda Sanderson's performance as the dragon was a personal favourite of mine). This house really pushed themselves to the limit, using live music in the form of an emotional rendition of Leonard Cohen's 'Hallelujah', and an ingenious use of film, showing the dynamic duo journeying through Ripon on their quest to reach the castle (as represented by Ripon Cathedral) that I'm sure will remain in the minds of the audience for years to come. It was a truly hilarious play.

School House then followed with their production of *School of Rock*, directed by a large team of dedicated sixth formers, with Robbie Aitken playing the role of the wannabe rock star Dewey Finn, determined to make a rock band out of a school class, accompanied by a fantastic supporting cast. This was a production that really won over the crowd, being filled with some classic comedy moments (the scene in which the class learn to "stick it to the man" through insulting Finn springs to mind). The use of classic rock music between scene changes gave the play a real 'rock and roll' feel, as well as helping create the build-up to the phenomenal final scene in which Finn and the band perform at the Battle of the Bands, a finale that truly got the audience rocking. On the whole, this was a hugely enjoyable production.

Friday 15th November was a more literary-based evening, with De Grey's production of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, followed by Porteus' take on Susan Hill's *The Woman In Black*.

The Secret Garden, directed by Phoebe Edwards, Jonathan Pitts and Adam Makepeace, was visually stunning, with some fantastic acting from Alice Robinson as the protagonist, Mary Lennox, accompanied by a brilliant supporting cast. This play really struck a great balance between heart-warming drama and spurts of comedy (often supplied by Lucy Watkiss as Miss Medlock: to call this housekeeper flustered would be the understatement of the century). The garden itself was created effortlessly and was simply beautiful, something that is a real credit to this House. Overall, this was a beautifully acted production, and I believe that the finale, in which the little boy, Colin Craven, played by Harry Edwards,

learns to walk in the garden may have brought a few tears to the eyes of audience members.

However, the warm feeling left by De Grey's production did not last long, as Porteus followed with their wonderfully eerie production of *The Woman In Black*, with every member of the audience on the edge of his or her seat. When a play opens with some seemingly harmless and yet chilling piano music, one should always expect horrific events to follow, and this production did not disappoint. Directed by a team of sixth formers led by Flora Holmes and Jamie Blyton, and starring Josh Belward as the ill-fated attorney Arthur Kipps, this production was chilling from start to finish. The constant presence of the woman in black herself in the background of almost every scene was terrifying, as one never quite knew when she was going to take her next victim. The creation of tension in this play was excellent, as it led up to some horrifying moments which made the audience jump, and in some cases actually scream, in fright. If in any following years any houses wish to execute a horror story well, they need look no further than this production for guidance. A truly terrifying play.

Since the productions themselves, the best actor (or in this case actors) award has been given to James Riley and Max Morrison for their roles in *Shrek*; the best actress award was awarded to Alice Robinson for *The Secret Garden*; and the overall winning house for the fifth time in a row is De Grey for *The Secret Garden*: a well-deserved success.

Having been involved in House Drama this year, I think I speak for all of us when I say that this has been an incredibly rewarding experience, and there is nothing so satisfying as the moment when everyone's hard work results in some great entertainment. Thank you and well done to all who made this year's House Drama competition such a success, and I'm sure that many others will enjoy this same experience in years to come.

Lizzie Alblas U6D



Welcome



Mr Weston before taking up the post of Head of Classics at Ripon Grammar School I was the Head of Classics at Richmond School. I have always been interested in the Ancient World and pursued these interests throughout my school career. I went on to study Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology at Durham University where I completed an MA.

My interests are Arcane Languages, Norse literature and culture, Latin Elegy, Roman Satire, Epic verse. Inevitably I enjoy reading as well as sports and music. I also enjoy bikejoring (cycling with dogs) or doing Canicross (running with dogs).

Mr Winston. I am a history teacher and form tutor at Ripon Grammar School. History is my passion: I gained my degree and my P.G.C.E. at the University of Cambridge and am now studying part-time to complete my Masters in Education there. My special areas of interest are the Late Antique and early medieval periods and the history of political thought. I am also a keen reader of books on philosophy and economics.

I started at RGS in January this year after moving north from a teaching post in Hertfordshire. Although I grew up in the Edgware area of London, I have really enjoyed my change of scenery, taking the opportunity to go walking and cycling in the local countryside as well as being able to eat the excellent locally produced food. My hobbies include mind games, (I played chess for England as a junior and run the chess club at RGS), reading and sport, particularly cricket, squash and football (Many pupils will know that I support the Arsenal!) For my last summer holiday I indulged my interest in mediaeval castles by going on a hiking tour of the Rhine Valley: the scenery was spectacular and I can really recommend the Riesling ice cream!



Mrs Addis I am the new Deputy Senior Housemistress in School House. I was previously Matron in charge of boarding at Ripon Cathedral Choir School until it sadly closed last year. I am enjoying my new role at Ripon Grammar School.

My main interest outside of school is singing. I am a member of a Ladies' Barbershop Chorus called the 'White Rosettes' which is based in Leeds. We are the current National and European champions having recently won our 14th Gold medal.

Mrs Mars I joined Ripon Grammar School to teach English in January 2013 after getting married and moving to the area. Originally from the Cotswolds, I read Classical Studies and English Literature at Durham University before completing my PGCE and MA at Durham's School of Education. I run several extra-curricular activities in the English department, including debating and poetry activities and competitions, and also organise the RGS Schools' Challenge team. My favourite hobbies are reading, walking in the Yorkshire Dales, watching Woody Allen films and making jam.



Mr Baines I originally come from Grimsby in north-east Lincolnshire but have lived in Nigeria and Saudi Arabia. It was under the American School system in Saudi Arabia that I first realised how interested I was in mathematics - partly because of my fantastic teacher Mr. Robinson (or Herr Gauss as he preferred to be called!)

I returned to England to sit my GCSE's and A-levels in mathematics, physics and biology as a boarder at St. James' School in Grimsby before attending Leeds University to study mathematics.

After graduating I taught at Skegness Grammar School as Second in Mathematics before joining Ripon Grammar School.

My main interests are skiing, playing the guitar, solving puzzles and walking the North Yorkshire moors with my wife and two sons.



Mrs Beasley I grew up in Cheshire and graduated from Manchester University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. After working as a quality engineer I trekked in India and Nepal before completing my PGCE at Oxford University. Having taught at schools in Oxford and Durham I have now settled in Yorkshire.

In my spare time I enjoy reading, singing and spending time with my two young sons.

Mr Dunmore I have worked in educational environments covering the many aspects of site provision for over twenty years and was originally an ICI apprentice, trained in Engineering and Site Services, in my home town of Harrogate. Having enjoyed broad experience in varied technical roles from engineering, building and manufacturing, to facilities and site management I now look forward to developing my work at Ripon Grammar School. My part time role as Premises Manager and educational visits co-ordinator is certainly full of challenging issues and tasks to address.



This new start is very much seen as a life style change. With three adult children away from home in higher education my time is now spent trying to catch up on home DIY projects, spending more quality time with my wife, Janet, the weekly lads' coffin-dodger gym sessions (I'm older than you think!) and plenty of dog walking.



Miss Bernal I am a Gap student at Ripon Grammar School and I'm from Cuenca, a small city in the south of Ecuador. I came here because I want to improve my English and I am really fond of English culture.

My favourite pastimes are playing tennis and dancing but I also love to read books; every time I find an interesting book, I get completely engrossed in it.

I am interested in studying forensic science and I will probably study abroad. It's a great pleasure to be at Ripon Grammar School, helping in the Spanish lessons and at Johnson House. I'm finding everything as I thought it would be.

Miss Herring I am originally from Middlesbrough and have spent the last few years in South London studying English and then in Glasgow gaining my librarianship qualification. I have loved my first term at Ripon Grammar School Library and look forward to getting to know more of the staff and students as time goes on. Outside of school I enjoy knitting and reading fiction and philosophy.



Mlle Marousez I am the French assistant for this school year at Ripon Grammar School and Boroughbridge High School. I come from Lille, in the North of France, where I graduated from university with a Master's degree in French literature; whilst I was studying I worked in a book shop.

I would like to become a teacher and coming to this school is a great opportunity for me to improve my English, and to learn about teaching. I find it really interesting and challenging to teach French as a foreign language. I am especially happy to be part of the teaching staff here at Ripon Grammar and to work with students who are so motivated and involved.

Mrs Lyons I have joined Ripon Grammar School from St Aidan's in Harrogate where I taught also French and German. Before entering teaching, I spent several years in London working as a European Marketing Manager in the IT industry.

I am originally from York and moved back there this summer. I am thoroughly enjoying my time at RGS so far and am looking forward to the challenges the rest of this year will bring. Outside school, I enjoy spending time with my husband, reading, walking in the countryside, cycling and playing with my two young nephews.





Mrs Gardiner I joined Ripon Grammar School in September as a Cover Supervisor which not only takes me into the classroom, but also to the physical education department where I am more than happy to help in any lessons or clubs.

I moved to Ripon with my husband in January from Manchester. In my previous job, I worked at Canon Slade School in Bolton for four years; I was in charge of swimming and thoroughly enjoyed working with the students.

I am now undertaking an NVQ Level 3 in supporting teaching and learning. My interests are swimming and horse riding.

Mr Hübler. I am a Gap student at Ripon Grammar School for this school year.

My home country is Germany and I have come from Dresden, in the east of Germany. I am here to gain some work experience and to continue to consider what I should study in the future. It is also interesting to learn about other countries with their different languages, customs and history.

Apart from travelling and learning new things, my main hobby is art which fortunately I still have the opportunity to pursue whilst here.



Mr Ward I completed my degree in mathematics at the University of Manchester after growing up near Dudley near Birmingham. After graduating I moved to Chester where I worked at The King's School for boys for four years before moving to Harrogate. I studied mainly statistics, finance, number theory and discrete mathematics during my degree but I also have a great love for the historical side of the subject and read this at length during my free time. I am also a keen brewer, part-time runner and swimmer and I love to paint Warhammer models. One of the next challenges in my life include training a puppy in the summer of 2014.

Mrs Morpeth Having graduated from The University of Leeds with a BA Hons in Music I gained my secondary teaching qualification through the graduate teaching programme (GTP).

I came to Ripon Grammar School from Harrogate Grammar School, where I was a teacher of both Music and Drama.

I am a keen French-horn player, and in my spare time I enjoy performing with two local ensembles, The White Rose Concert band and The Harrogate Philharmonic Orchestra. I am also one of several dedicated members of the Harrogate International Youth Festival committee which celebrates both local and international music making.



Mr Pepper I am a teacher of Religious Studies and Deputy Head of the Sixth Form. I am a grammar school boy myself (from Ermysted's in Skipton) and I have a degree in theology from the University of Oxford and a master's degree in education from the University of Cambridge.

I am a proud Yorkshire man, and have come to Ripon Grammar School after spending several happy years teaching at Harrogate Grammar School. I am deeply passionate about my subject, and try to pass on my enthusiasm for philosophy and religion to the students in my classroom.

My main interests are reading, cooking, Burnley F.C. and boxing. I also love travelling with my wife, Helen.

Watersports Trip 2013

The trip commenced on the last day of the summer term as thirty-three eager students clambered onto the coach. After the long, long journey we arrived at our destination of Taxo Les Pins, a campsite in Argeles sur Mer, in the south of France. After a meal we were shown to our caravans.

On the first day of activities, we went to Argeles beach to participate in kayaking, windsurfing, sailing and stand-up paddle boarding. At lunchtime we could relax on the beach, go down to the waves or search for some shady relief from the 30 plus temperatures. That evening our activity was "egg drop" which included several egg-related questions, chicken impressions and yolkly foreheads!

On Monday we went hydro-speeding (drifting downstream in white water with a float and flippers) and white water rafting in the Pyrenees. The teachers ended up in the water plenty of times (video footage available!) and we all had a chance to jump into the river from a stone ledge.

The next day we went snorkelling and discovered fish, corals and sea cucumbers! Then it was back to the beach for more activities. Our evening was spent in the local town where we could visit the shops and cafes, all the while practising our French.

On Wednesday we had a trip to Barcelona where we saw Gaudi's famous cathedral, visited gardens, shopped for souvenirs and went to a shopping centre for a Spanish Macdonald's tea.

We went canyoning on the last day - an adventure course involving jumps up to 8.5 metres high, slides, climbs and abseiling. The finale was a long, fun zipwire leading into a pool of water. We returned to the campsite with just enough time to watch the video the crew had captured on their head cameras throughout the week; this mainly consisted of thirty-seven people falling into water in various ways. We then we scrambled onto the coach for another twenty-seven hour journey back to England.

Maddie Charvill, 3A



Music

This term has seen much musical activity both within the school and the local community. This started very early in the academic year with the first public performance by the brass ensemble taking place at Ripon Cathedral on Sunday 22nd September.



Next on the agenda was the 2013 R n' B Factor, held this year at Outwood Academy Ripon. The R n' B Factor is a singing competition featuring Ripon Grammar School, Outwood Academy and Boroughbridge High School split into a junior and a senior competition over two consecutive nights. Ripon Grammar School were highly successful this year with Harry Edwards and Katharine Chatterton receiving first and second place in the junior final and Billie Tweddle and Emily Reed (accompanied by Mhairi Ellis) achieving first and third in the senior competition.

Our Autumn Concert was an excellent celebration of music-making. The evening showcased all of the music department's ensembles as well as the classroom singing that the first years had completed. A real highlight of the concert was the finale performance of a selection of music from Mamma Mia that was given by the Symphony Orchestra. The Symphony Orchestra also featured in the Carol Service this year.

Other performances this term have included; the string quartet playing at the opening of the Ripon Grammar School Christmas Fair, the Big Band performing as part of a jazz night for the Harrogate International Youth Festival, the brass ensemble playing at numerous community events including the Ripon bonfire event and the 'Dementia Forward' Santa Fun Run, student-led rock bands playing at the in-school heat for the Harrogate Area AMP Awards and the choir performing at the Ripon and Rural Learning Partnership Carol Concert as well as at our own Carol Service which was held in the Cathedral.

We are incredibly proud of all of our young musicians for all of their achievements. This term special mentions must be made of Joy Sutcliffe and Sophie Reed for their fantastic performances in the final for the BBC Radio 2 Chorister of the Year 2013 and to Jessica Bryden for successfully auditioning for the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. Well done!

Next term is set to be another busy one as we prepare for our production of 'Les Misérables' as well as many other engagements.

Miss Jackson

The current dates for the Spring term are:

23rd January – Music Awards, MU1

12th February – AMP Awards Final, Royal Hall, Harrogate

Various dates in March – Harrogate Competitive Festival and Music for Youth Regional Festival

18th – 21st March – Les Misérables, School Hall

2nd April – GCSE and A-Level Performance Day

20th April – HIYF Big Band Night

22nd April – HIYF Choral Night



Art trip to Paris

To give fresh impetus to the A2 art and design course, upper-sixth form artists visited Paris for four days in November. This trip allowed us to carry out our own visual research, providing many opportunities to photograph the amazing city, view first-hand the work of the artists we have chosen to study and sketch from these pieces. This material will help us to develop our sketchbook work and ultimately our final pieces, all of which will be as varied as the visual research we have chosen to focus on, from the cityscape of the beautiful Parisian buildings to the intricacy and paint quality of Van Gogh's paintings and to the nightscape of the bustling city from the Eiffel Tower at night.

We visited all of the major art galleries: La Galerie D'Art Moderne, the Pompidou Centre, the Louvre and L'Orangerie being just a few. Seeing the paintings we had studied before the visit was so valuable, as it is often difficult to appreciate paint technique and quality without viewing it in person. It was wonderful to find a great variety of art forms in the galleries: sculpture, modern art and more traditional paintings - there really was something to inspire us all. Seeing the Mona Lisa in the Louvre was a memorable moment and it was amazing to see such a famous piece in real life: it was almost surreal.

Walking around Paris itself allowed us to absorb the culture and ambience of the city, providing opportunities to take photographs that could potentially become the basis for developed pieces, taking into account the lighting, movement and the angles at which these were taken to create interesting compositions. It was amazing to see beautiful monuments such as L'Arc de Triomphe, lit up by streetlights on our first night in the city.

A particular highlight for many of us was visiting the Eiffel Tower at night: the tiring climb up to the top was certainly worth it! Once there, we were all astounded by the spectacular view, as people quite literally looked the size of ants! This was a fantastic way to conclude such a memorable trip.

The trip was a fantastic way for us all to develop our knowledge and understanding of our chosen artists and to focus on developing our own visual identity through photography and sketching throughout the visit. It has provided us with a firm foundation upon which to build our future developments. Many thanks to Mrs Henson, Mrs Howes and Mr Davies, who gave up their time to organise and run this opportunity for upper-sixth form artists. This was a trip which I am sure we will always remember.

Harriet Cunningham, U6E



Old Riponians

Jenny MacNair (née Dodsworth)



President:
Mrs Jenny Bellamy
Secretary:
Mr Euan Raffel
Treasurer:
Mr George Oworm

I attended Ripon Grammar School from 1990 to 1997. I still remember the day that I received my letter to say that I had passed the 11+. I went to St Wilfrid's Primary School in Ripon and we lived on a farm near Grantley. In those days our post arrived later than that of to arrive the 'townies' of Ripon so all of my classmates already knew their 11+ results. My Mum opened the letter at home and called school. I took the call in the staff room and was over the moon. I knew then how important a grammar school education could be for me.

My time at Ripon Grammar School was really enjoyable. I certainly wasn't up there with the highly intelligent students but I got by just fine. I'm at the stage now with my eldest son that I am thinking about secondary schools for him and I hear so many people saying that if their child is borderline or even not the brightest in the class they don't want them to go to the grammar school and 'struggle'. I have to say that, although I wasn't top of the class, I certainly never felt that I shouldn't be there. My GCSE results were pretty good and although I found A' levels a different kettle of fish I still managed to gain the four I needed to allow me to go to my first-choice University.

I left Ripon Grammar School in 1997 to study Speech Pathology and Therapy at Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh. Being an only child and living out in the wilds on a farm, I had had quite a sheltered childhood so moving to Edinburgh was a massive shock to me. I hadn't even been on a bus before and was baffled by the complexities of cost, return tickets, where I wanted to go, would I know where to get off?, and how would I get back to the halls of residence again?

The halls of residence were another shock to me, bearing in mind I had no siblings and lived on a very quiet farm. The noise was awful; either through the paper-thin walls or from outside the window twenty-four hours a day! All of this sounds ridiculous now but they were just two of the many things which made the first few months very daunting to me. Anyway I managed to make it through that year and then I moved into

a flat with friends. The following two years got a lot better and I grew to love Edinburgh.

In my final year I met Brian, my husband. When I graduated in 2000 and started looking for a job as a Speech Therapist I have to say I didn't really want to look much further away than Edinburgh! Unfortunately, these jobs are very hard to find as Edinburgh is such a desirable place to live, so I took other jobs over the following few years so that I could stay in Scotland to be with Brian. We got married in 2003 and had our first son in 2004. We lived in a tiny flat in Edinburgh and were starting to think about having another child but knew we couldn't fit another in the flat and also couldn't really afford a house locally. At this time my family home was sitting empty and so we made the decision to move to Yorkshire. It was a bit of a leap of faith as we had no jobs to come to but we hoped that it would give us the opportunity for a new chapter in our lives. With Brian's newly attained Master's degree under his belt, he decided on a new direction from his previous office job; he loved football and children and so bought a pre-school football coaching franchise. I worked in an office to make sure we had some form of predictable income and this allowed us to build up the business. We then had our second son in 2007.

I really enjoy bringing our children up in Ripon. There seems to be so much to do with them and they are involved in so much. We don't have a night free when we are not at some class or club. I have become very involved with their primary school as chair of the PTA and I am really enjoying seeing them develop and blossom into lovely boys.

Earlier this year we moved away from the franchise and started out on our own. We now run two fantastic football coaching businesses together from home. I feel that I have an amazing work-life balance. I feel so lucky that I can work with my husband and the businesses are doing well. Yet I can drop everything for the children at any point, so if there is a play on or a special lunch, I can always be there to watch and support them.

I read some of the articles in the RGS News from other Old Rips and think to myself that maybe I should be embarrassed that I am not a world class architect or renowned concert pianist and then I take a step back and look at my fantastic family life and maybe it's not all that bad! !

A Reunion to celebrate Old Riponians who gave their lives in the Great War (1914-1918)

Near the 1st XV rugby pitch there is a plaque dedicating the field to the memory of the boys from Ripon Grammar School who died in the First World War. Many years ago, the Old Riponians raised the money to buy the field and it is still in our possession, acting as a permanent memorial to the boys who gave their lives for their country.

It would be hard not to be aware of the fact that next year is the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War and the Old Riponians' Committee is working hard to track down the histories of our boys who were in the that war. One of the things they have discovered is that half the 1913 cricket team was amongst those who died.

In July 2014 our Summer Reunion will take the form of a memorial to the boys who went to war. The date is yet to be settled, and obviously we are already working hard on this, but if anyone has any information about these Old Riponians, whose names are on the memorial in the library, then could you please email me on cft-jbellamy@supanet.com

In honour of Old Riponians who gave their lives:

A.R Abell, T.A. Armistead, W.Arnett, R.Aslin, T.T.Bake, G.Blackburn, D. Boyd-Carpenter, S.F. Cartwright, G.R.Dixon, K.Dixon, F.L.Dunwell, F.A.Flesher, J.S.Firth, P.Green, H.Gilling, J.A.Greensit, T Hamilton, E.O.Hart, J.H Headlam, R.Healey, W.C.H Dougall-Hodson, J.F. l'Anson, B.Ireland, J.L.Jameson MC, H.A. Jameson, GG.Kinder M.C., H.Knowles, A.PI.Marston, A.W.Mason, H.Mitchell, J.S.Morton, N.Nesbitt, O.New, A.T Parker, E.Parker, E.A.Robinson M.M., V.G. Sellers, C.de G. PSellers, F.EG. Southwell, E.J.C Supple, H.Suttle, R.A.Snow, J.S.Storey, H.Trevor, J.E.Tilston, G.Valentine, A.S.Wells, C.S. Wolstenholme

Parents' Association

NEWS FROM THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION



The Parents' Association has had a great start to the Autumn term. We welcomed new members to the committee at the AGM in October but it is never too late to join up; just email pa@ripongrammar.co.uk for the date of next meeting as we would love to see you

Communication is something we have tried to develop over the last year and we rely heavily on you reading your emails and checking texts to find out what the PA is up to; most of our information is sent via email to the address you have supplied to school. In addition to the monthly Parents' Association updates, please check the school website where you will find out about events which are taking place.

Apart from planning events, deciding how to spend the money raised is one of the most enjoyable tasks of the Parents' Association. Recently we have purchased two table-tennis tables and quiz buzzers for the 'Schools' Challenge' (like University Challenge), together with financing the production scripts and music for 'Les Misérables', an i-pad for the drama department and House bibs and badges!

The new term started with a wine, cheese and quiz evening, specifically aimed at parents of new starters, with the intention of introducing fellow parents to each other and to the Parents' Association. All those attending had a jolly evening with lots of laughs and witty answers to quiz questions!

Our "who dunnit" 'Murder at the Pyramids' was a fun-filled evening with suspense and drama performed by Ripon Rowel players. This evening raised £1,400.

Many of you will have attended our second Christmas Fair and will have managed to start, if not finish, your Christmas shopping from the diverse range of over forty stalls. These sold everything from affordable scarves and handmade jewellery to vintage homeware and stylish bags and hampers. A huge thank you to organiser Fiona Pearman, the committee and team of parent volunteers and to all those parents who ran a stall and those who assisted on the day - from manning the kitchen, to providing all the delicious cakes and biscuits. This event raised £1,400.

We received many compliments following this event, two of which are below:

Dear Fiona and Committee,

Thank you once more for letting me have the opportunity to come along and join in the Christmas spirit of the fair. The choir sang beautifully, the restaurant helpers were fantastic, as were the chocolate brownies, so my daughter informed me!

Hope you all have Merry Christmas

Many thanks for your email and congratulations on raising such a splendid sum for school!

As usual, the hall looked fantastic and there was a lovely atmosphere throughout the day. The choir and musicians got the event off to a wonderful start and everybody I spoke to seemed to enjoy the market and the wide variety of stalls.

I am very grateful - both as a parent and as a stallholder - for all the hard work which the Committee and helpers put into making it such a success. Thank you.

Looking forward to 2014, the very popular Burns' Night is to be held on 25th January. This is now in its tenth year and is always very popular. Bring a group of friends (tables of 8 - 10) and come and dance the evening away to "Cobblers Jig" ceilidh band, enjoy a three-course dinner and toast the haggis! Tickets can be purchased from Mrs Kinread in the school office for £20 per person if bought before Christmas. (After Christmas the price rises to £22!)

We will be running two further Astronomy evenings, courtesy of Mr Barker, Head of Astronomy and Engineering Coordinator, on Tuesday 7th January and Thursday 9th January. Tickets are £10 for adults and £5 for children. Details of how to apply and more information can be found on the school website.

The Parents' Association are always present at parents' evenings, drama nights and other school events and are delighted to offer 'Free Trade' refreshments; just buying a coffee or tea adds up over the year making in excess of a £1,000 per annum towards the association funds. Thank you to Julia Whitham for co-ordinating this and the volunteers who tirelessly turn out and provide baked goodies too!

Our most successful fundraiser this year has been the Summer Prize draw with over a dozen foodie prizes. The first prize worth £750 was won by the Scannell family. A huge thank you to Ruth Campbell and Peri Langdale for co-ordinating this and to all those parents who sold tickets to their friends and relatives and no doubt to themselves. The raffle raised over £2,700.

If you are not already a '200 Club' member please join! £15 per annum enters you into a cash prize draw each month with the chance of winning £50 or £25. Full details, along with all the other PA events, can be found on the school website.

Dates for 2014

7th January and 9th January - Astronomy evenings

25th January Burns' Night

21st June - Midsummer Magic Ball - reserve your tickets by emailing pa@ripongrammar.co.uk

Cameron McCormack's Arkwright Engineering Scholarship Success



Cameron McCormack has secured one of the seven national Arkwright Engineering Scholarships, thus identifying him as one of the country's most able future leaders in engineering. This prestigious award will support Cameron throughout his degree (MEng Chemical Engineering via the Engineering Tripos at King's College, University of Cambridge).

Cameron, who achieved four A*'s in his chemistry, physics, mathematics and further mathematics A-levels, said: "The scholarship I got in the sixth form was a big advantage in securing work experience and it also funded an engineering

course I did between the lower and upper sixth. It will be a massive help financially, and will be great for my CV."

The scholarship is valued at £12,000 over the duration of his university course and is sponsored by the Reece Foundation, a charitable foundation founded in 2007 by the late Dr Alan Reece, a pioneering engineer who owned and set-up the company 'Pearson Engineering Ltd'. Dr Martin Thomas, Chief Executive of the Arkwright Scholarships Trust, said of Cameron's success: "Securing an Arkwright Engineering Scholarship during his sixth form years put Cameron in the top echelon of the UK's most able future leaders in engineering."

Cameron formally received the award at the Arkwright Scholarship Award Ceremony in Glasgow on 25th October. Ripon Grammar School congratulates Cameron on this exceptional achievement!

Greenpower Electric Car Club

True, it is neither yellow nor a submarine, but given that it is a slippery teardrop shape and that it will be painted and sign-written in the bright livery of our sponsors' vehicles, the name "Yellow Submarine" seems appropriate (if you are familiar with the music of a certain legendary band).

The new Ripon Grammar School electric car has been making pleasing progress recently. Our two dedicated teams of junior and senior members completed the painstaking job of carving and sanding the styrofoam mould into shape during the summer months and carefully covering it in woven carbon-fibre cloth set in epoxy resin. They have now cut out the drivers' access door and removable tail section and almost completed the removal of the now redundant styrofoam. This technique is similar to covering a balloon in papier maché, only using much stronger materials. For the first time our young designers have been able to sit inside the bodywork and imagine themselves racing it around Goodwood circuit at speed!

We have already prepared some of the steering mechanism, wheels and braking system so all we have to do is to fit it inside the body work. This sounds simple if you say it quickly but realistically we still have a lot of work to do. The team have yet to decide whether to use a joystick (a la Carbon Comet), handlebars or conventional steering wheel for control and whether or not to incorporate gears in the drivetrain. You may be surprised to read that the cars that have performed best in the finals since the reduction in battery capacity three years ago have not used gears at all but instead relied on clever computer control to govern their maximum speed which has been monitored carefully by the teams in the pits via a laptop.

With continued hard work we hope to be driving the Yellow Submarine next summer. We will



Above are members of the RGS Greenpower Seniors enjoying their first sit inside the "Yellow Submarine's" body-shell (currently in bare carbon-fibre finish)

continue to race our other two cars, the Electric Chair and Carbon Comet which means that eighteen students could potentially drive during the four hour races. Many thanks to Econ Engineering, Ripon Auto Electrics and the Ripon Grammar School Parents' Association for their generous support of our projects.

EPQ Article

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is an opportunity to sample what studying for a university degree is really like, whilst investigating a very specific area of your choice that you wouldn't get the chance to study through your school subjects. The EPQ has three components: the product, the logbook and the presentation. The product is usually an essay of about 5,000 words, but can be anything from a physical product to a piece of art, music or drama. In the presentation students have to demonstrate not only what they have found out from their investigations, but also how the process has helped them to become better, more independent learners. The EPQ helps to prepare students for university by giving them the chance to enhance their academic, research and presentation skills. The process is a great chance to explore an area of real interest.

Through my EPQ I have investigated how far the ethnic, religious and political diversity in Syrian society has contributed to today's civil war in the country. My interest in Middle Eastern affairs stems from travelling to the region whilst living in Cyprus. Next year I hope to study politics and international relations and the EPQ process has helped equip me with some of the skills I will need for life after school. My EPQ investigation has allowed me to explore the political evolution of the Syrian state, including how the Assad regime, a family from the minority Alawite sect, came to power, and how Syria's relationships with different countries have developed. Through my research I have come to realise how divided the opposition to the ruling Assad regime is, and it has made me question whether the deposing of the Assad regime would benefit the country in the long-term, or whether it would only lead to many further years of conflict between the remaining groups.

Jamie Blyton, U6F

At the end of my lower-sixth year I was offered the chance to undertake an EPQ. This project could be on any topic not in my current curriculum subjects and would entail a lot of independent study to research a question and create a piece of work in the form of a 5,000 word essay. As I have applied to study music at degree level and have always been intrigued by how music affects the brains of different people, I chose to focus my research upon the question; "How does music therapy improve the development of children with cerebral palsy?" I have thoroughly enjoyed exploring this topic and by expanding my knowledge of the subject and hobby I love, I believe I have developed some of the skills I will need at university level.

Sarah Owens, U6B

The EPQ has not only given me the opportunity to develop both my ability to complete a research project and communicate my findings, but it has also allowed me to explore a subject of great interest to me in a very detailed way. My investigation into the way F. Scott Fitzgerald presents the concept of the American Dream in his novel *The Great Gatsby* has been fascinating, allowing me to see this novel in a new light. Furthermore, my research led me to read several interesting documents: some were about Fitzgerald's own life; others were of historical importance. I found reading the ideals set down in the American Declaration of Independence (1776) particularly interesting, and I have realised just how large a part they have played a large role in forming my own opinion on the very definition of the American Dream. Overall, the EPQ has been, and continues to be, a very worthwhile experience.

Lizzie Alblas, U6D

An evening with Sir Ian Botham, OBE

Come along to Ripon Grammar School at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 4 February 2014 and meet the famous cricketer, Sir Ian Botham, OBE. Sir Ian will be giving a talk and there will be the opportunity to ask questions about a career in sport. Refreshments will be provided.

Tickets £10, available from Mrs Kinread, school office.

Further details will be available on the school website as soon as possible.



What Happens in Penzance?



In early October a group of lower-sixth art students set off on a four-day trip to Cornwall, following in the footsteps of artists past and present: the region's unique landscape, colour and light are a great attraction for artists across Britain today, as it was when St Ives was an influential centre for British art in the mid-twentieth century.

After an eight-hour bus journey, with countless stops and a few wrong-turns, the group finally reached Penzance youth hostel. It took us a short time to find our feet before we were off again, dragged out on a night walk around Penzance by Mr Duckworth, walking along the seafront and round the harbour, before hurriedly rushing back to watch 'Educating Yorkshire'!

The next two days were spent travelling around southern Cornwall, visiting St Ives for a 'whistle-stop-tour' of the various art galleries there, including the acclaimed Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden; although the artist died in 1975, her workshop remains unaltered. We also stopped at the ancient stones of Lanyon Quoit, a neighbouring tin mine and Porthcurno beach. This was, I'm sure, a highlight for many, as we reached the cove on our first morning with the weather on our side - the beach was lit up with sunshine, reflected off the silver sand and turquoise sea. We even managed to squeeze in a trip to the cinema on our final night!

The trip was challenging for everyone, as we tackled abstract art and hasty, twenty-minute sketches, in our attempts to capture the surrounding environment; but we all agreed that the trip was really fun and and worthwhile.

Sophie Veitch, L6F



French Exchange

My experience of the French exchange trip was really good. The coach journey was very long but we had fun and managed to sleep for some of the time! When we arrived at the school everyone was busy looking for their partners and I was a bit nervous about meeting someone for the first time and staying with them for ten days! My partner and I found each other and we went back to her home.

My first impression of the house was that it was very cosy. The dog barked a lot at first but he soon calmed down! My family were very kind, asking whether I'd had enough to eat on the coach, did I want anything now etc. We talked for a while and then I went to bed; I was exhausted!

The next day we organised what we were to do for the week. The family were surprised that I didn't have any slippers and bought me a pair! I now never take them off! I was so excited to hear about what we were going to do for the week; horse riding, a visit to the zoo and to the aquarium... so many things! It was strange to hear them speak in French to each other and at first I didn't understand most of it. However, by the end of the week I felt that I my French had really improved and that I could understand what was said, although it was a little faster than the school listening papers!

On the second day, the English students met up and we went bowling. It was lovely to see everybody again and we talked about what we'd been doing and where we were going to go later in the week. Saintes, the town we were visiting, was very beautiful and it was lots of fun walking round the shops and seeing how very different they were in comparison to shops in England.

I went horse riding with my partner on the Wednesday and the day after we visited L'île d'Aix: a small island without cars. We walked round and the views were absolutely stunning! On Friday we went to the Zoo de La Palmyre where we fed the animals and got very close to them! It was very strange to see the differences between European zoos and British zoos. Here we are very focused on conservation whereas in Europe the focus is more on the pleasure of visitors and animals. L'Aquarium de La Rochelle was amazing! The exhibitions were very open and, when I visited, it was extremely busy (probably due to the rain!).

Visiting the school was really interesting. It was very different to our school; all the lessons were in one classroom, the school day was much longer, as were the breaks, and the lessons were all in French! I understood a little but it was the smaller differences that were noticeable. They say "ADN" not "DNA" as well as other slight differences to everyday school life.

The trip to Cognac was another new experience! We visited a distillery and saw some Cognac that was made in the 1800s! It was really amazing to see how it's made.

After a long coach journey we finally arrived home. I can't wait until my exchange partner comes to England so she can meet all my friends. My French has come on in leaps and bounds and after speed limits of 110km/h it felt nice to get back to the traffic jams of England!

Molly Ireland, 4B

House Activities

This year there are four House Captains per house as there are so many events taking place throughout the year. I am already indebted to the House Captains for their stalwart efforts this term in getting to know their House members, and encouraging them to take part in the myriad of events on offer. They are:

DeGrey - Rosie Lyall, Bethan Moore, Sam Place and Quinn O'Connell

Hutton - Natalie Mounsey, Charlotte Kessell, James Woolfenden and Patrick Savage

Porteus - Mabel Ellerker, Zara Cotton, Sam Hudson and Harry Johnston

School - Lori Wong, Jess Butterell, Sam McCoubrey and Angus Crampton

House Drama took centre stage this term with brilliant performances from all four houses. A full report is included in an article dedicated to this event but I would like to applaud everybody on their efforts in bringing such fine productions to fruition - not just the actors but the lighting crews, scene changers, costume designers, musicians, producers etc. I was personally bowled over by the professionalism of each house, the commitment and dedication to rehearsing long into the evening and at weekends and the sheer enjoyment and exuberance of each cast. Well done to everyone involved.

Mrs Mars ran an English Poetry Speaking House Competition which saw School winning the Junior Competition, DeGrey were second, Porteus third and Hutton fourth. In the senior competition, School once again came out as victors with Hutton as runners up, DeGrey third and Porteus bringing up the rear. The winning entrants from this event went forward to represent Ripon Grammar School in a national competition.

House Masterchef has proved a popular event in the past and this year has been no exception. As a judge in this competition I had to bow to Mr Stevens' knowledge and expertise as I was just impressed to be eating something that wasn't burnt or out of a tin (cooking is not my forte!). Supported ably by their House Captains, Hutton won the junior age category and School won the Intermediate competition. The senior event was won by Porteus. The overall standard has been extremely high. My thanks to Mr Stevens for the time and effort he puts into running Masterchef each year and also to the participants for attempting exciting dishes (Tia Morrell's scallops spring to mind!) that were delicious.



As Ripon Grammar School is the National Centre of Excellence for VX it was important to me that this new event went well. Junior VX, involving more than thirty first and second years, was the first intra-mural competition in this new and exciting sport. I have always been impressed with the impact this activity has, both on sporty and non-sporty students and boys and girls alike. It is quick to pick up and those who have never played it before can be playing the full game within five minutes. The most impressive newcomer has to be Sam Madison who was brilliant at blocking despite this being his first go at the sport. The second round of the junior competition was on Monday 25th November with Hutton winning all their matches.

The final House Event of the term was House Swimming Sports with the girls' event on the afternoon of December 10th and the boys' event on December 17th. I am delighted and very grateful that the Parents' Association has donated £400 to providing House Swimming Hats and House Vests/Bibs so that each competitor feels a sense of pride and identity when representing their House.

In the New Year, I will be introducing a House Rock-Climbing competition with the help of Mr Mollard, our resident expert. By offering different activities I am hoping to entice all students to represent their House in at least one activity this year. Miss Lancaster is helping me to build a database which will identify student involvement in House activities and help us to encourage everyone to be as involved as possible. I am enormously grateful to Miss Lancaster for the time she has spent helping with pupil allocation to Houses this year.

Finally I received many encouraging emails after I wrote to you all outlining my intentions for the House System at Ripon Grammar School - many thanks to those who offered support and ideas.

Mrs Mackenzie, Head of House System

Upper Sixth Practice Interviews

Interviews are a vital part of most application procedures, whether for university or for employment, and so on 13th November, in preparation for these future encounters, our upper-sixth students were given an interview with professionals experienced in interviewing

Interviews are a vital part of most application procedures, whether for university or for employment, and so on 13th November, in preparation for these future encounters, our upper-sixth students were given an interview with professionals experienced in interviewing.

Each student had prepared a CV, together with a covering letter, explaining why they would like to be considered for a work experience placement of their choice, and before the day itself were encouraged to prepare by thinking about questions they might be asked and how they could best demonstrate their suitability for their chosen roles.

For most students this was their first proper experience in an interview situation and many said they felt quite nervous about what this might entail. Each interview

lasted about twenty minutes, and students received immediate verbal feedback and a subsequent written account of their performance, including feedback on their technique and areas for improvement. Overall, students found this to be an invaluable and highly rewarding experience, making the preparation process during their busy term very worthwhile.

The interviewers were extremely impressed with our upper-sixth, commenting "it was a real pleasure to interview them" and "a good set of well prepared and confident students". Whilst encouraging them to continue to enrich their CV's with extra-curricular activities, they wished them every success in their future careers.

Mrs Locke

Careers Club

A Careers Club was launched at the beginning of the autumn term. Each month visiting speakers will talk to students of all ages about a variety of different and fascinating careers.

Our first speaker was Ritchie Fiddes, who gave an informal presentation about careers in business and the information technology industry. Ritchie, a former Ripon Grammar School student, founded 'Backup Technology' in 2005. This is now a highly successful, global business with an annual revenue of over £10 million! Household names such as the BBC, Red Cross, Liverpool Football Club and Suzuki all secure their technology with Backup Technology. Students were particularly keen to explore opportunities for self-employment and discussions revealed a number of budding entrepreneurs!

Prabuddha Sunwar, 3B, was very impressed by Ritchie's talk and commented, "The talk totally changed my mind about business and gave me a glimpse of what I might want to do in life. It was a privilege to meet a successful businessman and to find out how he made his IT business grow."



In October, we had a visit from Judy Gilmore, Senior Nursing Sister, and a student nurse from Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust, both of whom gave very interesting and motivational accounts of daily life as nurses in the community. Students learned about the very rewarding career as a nurse and were able to ask questions about opportunities within the wide range of nursing services. Megan Lewis, 2A, found the talk "very helpful and informative about the wide range of jobs related to nursing and different career paths you can take," whilst Jack Baldwin, 3A, who is thinking about a career in a medical field, said that he had "discovered a lot about entry requirements and career progression within nursing."

Most recently, in November, Mr Anthony Henson gave an excellent presentation about architecture, demonstrating to students the broad array of skills and aptitudes needed in the profession and the variety of work which he enjoys as an architect. We watched a video showing the development of a project from design through to completion of a building and witnessed the diverse teamwork that the architecture requires.

"It was really interesting and opened my eyes to the incredible challenges you can be set in designing a building," said Issy Gould, 5B. Another fifth former, Matthew Griffiths, commented "I hadn't realised the number of other specialists that must get involved to bring a building to life."

George Simenacz and Daniel McGarr, 2C, found the talk very beneficial and said "we would thoroughly recommend Careers Club to anybody."

In December, Carlton Caswell, a Ripon Grammar School parent, came to talk to students about his career in the prison service which all students found very interesting.

Mrs Locke

RGS Societies

Medical Focus Society

The medical focus society is a group of sixth formers who share the common goal of becoming a doctor. We meet at least once every two weeks and enjoy discussing medical issues and related news articles. Last year we were able to arrange for guest speakers to come in to help us with our applications and give us an insight into a career in medicine. All members have found the society very beneficial and we have found it useful to discuss and share experiences.

Zara Cotton, U6B

Economics Society

The Economics Society, led by Mr Demir, is open to upper-sixth students who want to learn about, discuss and debate economics-related issues. You do not have to study economics as an A-level to join, and if you are interested we can be found in the cellars from 1pm every Friday. At the Economics Society we discuss a new topic every week, exploring areas as diverse as the American political system, the growing Chinese economy and the debate surrounding whether the UK should remain in the EU, plus many more. Despite our name, joining the society is also a great way to discuss social and political issues, and participants have the opportunity to give presentations on topics of their choice.

Jamie Blyton, U6F

Literacy Society

Ripon Grammar School Literacy Society meets each week during enrichment periods and provides a forum for lively debate of all things literary. The meetings were particularly useful during the AS English Literature course to use this time to consolidate our knowledge of the texts relevant to the course, share wider reading and contribute alternative interpretations to spark debate and conversation. Ultimately, this was very good preparation for the examination. We are looking forward to future activity within the group, integrating both AS and A2 students, to the mutual benefit of all.

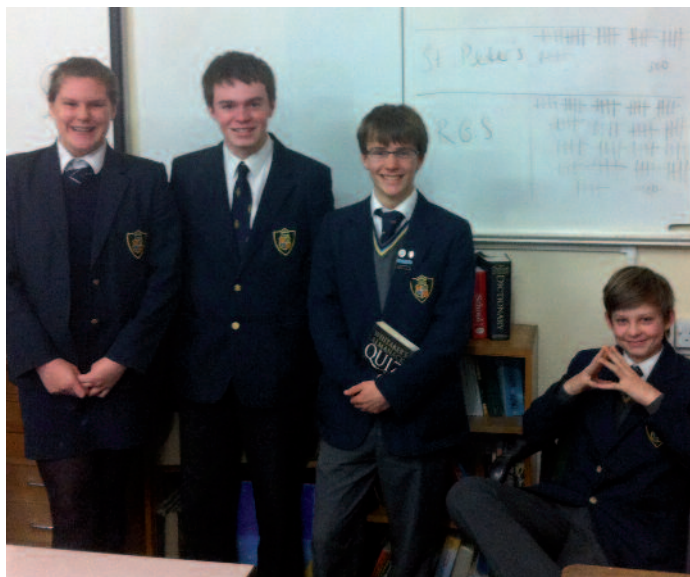
Harriet Cunningham, U6E

The Debating Society

This term saw the first meeting of the Ripon Grammar School Sixth Form Debating Society. The first motion to be discussed was, "Should religion be abolished?", a most controversial subject which sparked great debate between Tom Ayoub and Michael Hasan, proposing the motion, and Lucy Watkiss and Ed Johnson opposing the motion, with some probing, thought-provoking questions from the floor. These revolved around the role of religion in instigating conflict, the place of religion in the modern world, its proposed conflict with ideals such as gender equality and the extent to which faith is a personal choice. Both houses argued well and tackled these challenging questions with Lucy and Ed being the most persuasive as the final result was fourteen to seven opposing the motion. After such an initial triumph the society eagerly anticipates debating subjects such as the responsibility of the BBC, the role of the monarchy, intervention in Syria and the arguments for reversing the legalization of abortion. The prospect of participating in the national debating competitions and the English Schools Mace is also an enticing goal for the future. We would very much welcome new members who are keen to partake in debates and discuss these contentious issues.

Lucy Watkiss, U6F

Schools' Challenge



Which poet wrote The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock and The Wasteland?

In which country did Albert II abdicate, to be replaced by his son Philippe in July 2013?

Can you multiply the faces of a cube, by the edges of a cube, and divide by the corners of a cube?

The Ripon Grammar School Schools' Challenge team were prepared and ready to face questions like this on Monday evening in the first round of the national Schools' Challenge quiz competition. Fantastic answers on topics as diverse as Terry Pratchett, champagne and etymology put the RGS team in the lead from the very first round, which they held throughout the whole of the tense thirty minute match. The opposition, a team from St Peter's York, looked shocked at the speed and confidence with which Helen Elsworth, 3A, George Peat (lower sixth) and Joe Willis, 2D, answered. The team was brilliantly captained by Twm Stone (upper sixth), whose diligent preparation ensured that whole team were well prepared and worked together seamlessly to answer bonus questions. The next round will be played later this year against other winners from North East schools' heats in this prestigious (and mostly independent schools') competition.

Answers, by the way, are:
1. T.S. Eliot, 2. Belgium, 3. $6 \times 12 \div 8$

Mrs Mars

Gymnastics

Shannon Kelly, 3C, participated in her first gymnastics competition when she was seven years old. She has come a long way since then, competing at both a regional and national level, and recently competing in a competition called 'Sapphire' in Hemel Hempstead near London. Her favourite aspect of gymnastics is the bars and last summer she won a competition on the bars in Manchester. More recently, she, and her team, won a Yorkshire competition by the high margin of nine marks! These results show the promise of a rising star, but she says, modestly, that she does not know what the future holds for her in gymnastics. It is a question of "watch this space"!

Flora Holmes, U6D

Charity Week 2013



On 21st October Ripon Grammar School engaged in an annual week of convivial antics and events devoted to raising money for a charity chosen by sixth-form students. This year it was decided that MERLIN would be the chosen charity. MERLIN (Medical Emergency Relief International) is the U.K.'s leading international charitable trust sending medical experts to the front line of global emergencies. They deliver medical expertise to countries shattered by war, earthquakes or floods in Africa, Central Asia, South and South East Asia and Haiti and stay to ensure lasting health care.

The varied array of activities throughout the week was outstanding, and a testament to the students' effort and determination to raise as much money as possible. The first year students put their baking skills to the test by producing countless cakes to sell at break-time. Forms from all years held numerous events, such as chocolate raffles and 'gunge the teacher', as part of a form competition within year groups. It's safe to say that MERLIN was ever-present around school, from the merchandise stalls to the Harry Potter-esque attire of prefects displaying Merlin Wizard hats with their gowns. Break-time events did not disappoint, with notable favourites such as the science departments' homage to 'The Rocky Horror Picture Show', Purple Mafia,

Mr Walker's legendary singing and an ingenious dance from sixth-form boys who alluded to teachers through the use of masks. Moreover, we were treated with lunchtime performances including the annual, and unforgettable, 'Teacher Panto' (The Wizard of Oz) and a parody panel show entitled '8 out of 10 Dogs...does Countdown'. The 'Teacher Wrecking Ball' event on Wednesday lunchtime saw teachers balance on moving platforms whilst concurrently throwing an inflatable wrecking ball at one another...what we do for charity! Events afterschool were also held to raise money for this global, life-saving charity. First-year students took over the hall on one evening for a 'Onesie Film Night', a third-year Halloween party was held on Thursday evening and sixth formers attended their charity ball on the Friday. A special assembly on Friday morning must also be mentioned. Patrick Savage took the lead with Ellie Hill who filmed a parody of James Corden's 'coaching' sketches around school. The presentation of this masterful film, alongside Mr McGrann's willingness to wear a gorilla costume, concluded the hysterical, rewarding week with a bang!

A thank you must be made to not only the students for their positivity, determination and generosity but to the teachers as well for their willingness to take part in numerous events throughout the week. A total of around £8,000 had been raised for MERLIN by October half term, an incredible feat in itself, with more money expected in the second half of term.

Jonathan Pitts, U6F

Speech Day 2013

Record-breaking high performers were invited back to be recognised for their achievements.

The group who took their A levels this summer contributed to the best results ever at Ripon Grammar School, headmaster Martin Pearman told guests at the school's annual speech day.

The results took the grammar to the top of all state schools in Yorkshire, with 79.4 per cent of all A levels being A*, A or B grade.

The students took pride of place in front of an audience that included the Mayor and Mayoress of Ripon, the Mayor of Harrogate, county and district councilors, governors, parents, staff and guest speaker Mark Damazer CBE, former controller of BBC Radio 4 and now Master of St Peter's College, Oxford University.

Chairman of governors at the Grammar School Dr Peter Mason said: "This has been another excellent year with much to celebrate.

"With eagerness in learning and inspiration in teaching comes the panoply of opportunities. The huge range of courses and prestigious employment gained by last year's leavers confirms that Ripon Grammar School is a place of opportunity."

Students have gone on to study at top universities, with nine gaining places at Oxford and Cambridge, and two are studying in Maastricht and the USA.

Next year is set to bring additional facilities at the school with work starting at Easter on a new humanities building with dedicated classrooms for history, religious studies and modern foreign languages.

The work, which should be completed by next November, will also see an upgraded

entrance to the school off Clothholme Road.

Future plans include an extension to the girls' boarding house ready for September 2015, for which North Yorkshire County Council has confirmed funding.

Addressing the students, Mr Damazer said: "There are things more important than being clever, but being clever is not a bad start.

"More or less nothing beats the love of knowledge and it doesn't matter if that knowledge is not immediately useful. Knowledge does not have to be useful to be fun; it's worth chasing for its own sake."

In warning them that it was always possible to bounce back from failure, he added: "There is no problem with good fortune; do not apologise for it. But some people do not have the luck of coming to a school like this, or being blessed with your brains.

"So be clever, find out about things, never never give up being intellectually curious, don't worry if your pursuit of knowledge doesn't immediately, or ever, make you wealthier, don't panic when you make a mistake or fall over and never underestimate the value of kindness."



Ripon Grammar School headmaster Martin Pearman, guest speaker Mark Damazer CBE and chairman of governors Peter Mason

Some of the prize-winning students who contributed to Ripon Grammar School's best ever results



Equestrian News

The Ripon Grammar School equestrian team competed in the National Schools' Equestrian Association north-east area show-jumping competition at Northallerton Equestrian Centre on Sunday, 24 November. The event was well supported with over a dozen secondary schools competing.



Lucy Vesty on Trixie

In Class One, the junior team came fifth, comprising Anna Sutcliffe on Penny, Jemima Strachan on Sunny and Georgina Turner on Spirit, and in the second event, a good effort was made by Lizzie Walker on Merlin and Lucy Vesty on Trixie.

The senior team, comprising Lizzie Walker and Alex Nanton, came fourth in Class 3 (90cm class).

As the competition progressed, the jumps increased in height. Alex Nanton came individual second in Class 4 (1m high show-jumping) on Kova, and Lizzie Walker, on CVS Carousel, came fourth in the same class.

Well done to all and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day.

Mrs Henson



Anna Sutcliffe on Penny, Jemima Strachan on Sunny and Georgina Turner on Spirit

Camera Club



Frosted leaf,
by Issy Gould

Ice Lolly,
by James Hamilton



Robin,
by Mr McLennan



by Vicky Frost



Ruins,
by Emma Money

RGS NEWS CONTACT DETAILS

If you would like to include an article in the next edition of the RGS News, please contact Mrs Patricia Storey, headmaster's secretary, at storeyp@ripongrammar.co.uk
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