

# Clocktower

Keeping alumni in touch with Ripon Grammar School and each other



The orphaned schoolboy who found solace in poetry

## The power of **WORDS**

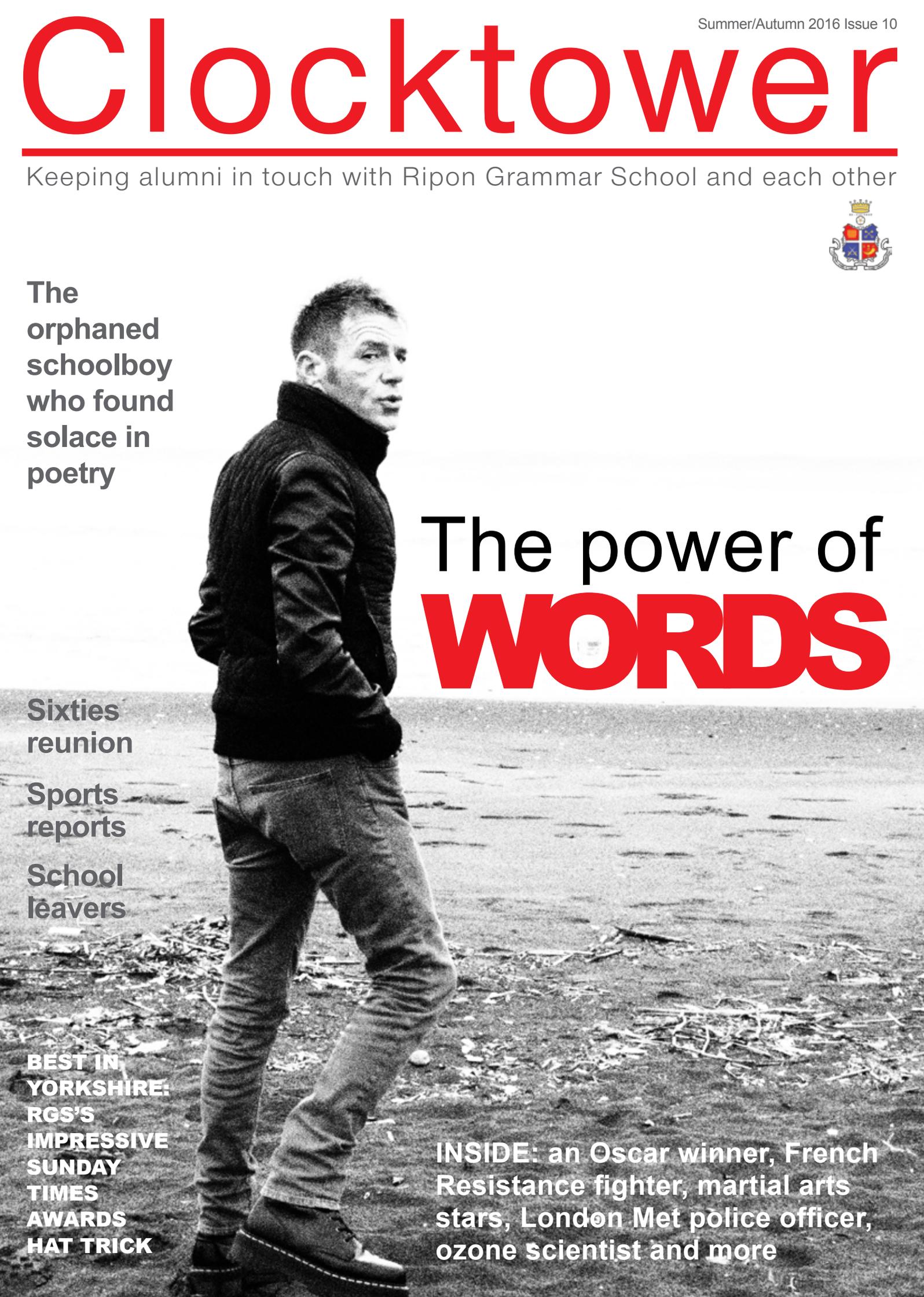
Sixties reunion

Sports reports

School leavers

**BEST IN YORKSHIRE: RGS'S IMPRESSIVE SUNDAY TIMES AWARDS HAT TRICK**

**INSIDE:** an Oscar winner, French Resistance fighter, martial arts stars, London Met police officer, ozone scientist and more



## A letter from the editor



Dear former students and friends of RGS,

ONE past pupil told me recently she didn't feel she could produce an entry for the Clocktower's "Where are they now?" section because: "You have to be a rocket scientist or something like that, don't you?".

Nothing could be further from the truth. In the three years I have been doing this job I have had the pleasure of meeting a wide range of former RGS students, from photographers and teachers to charity volunteers, caterers, hairdressers, actors, accountants, musicians, entrepreneurs, writers and engineers.

One interviewee even gave up his lucrative but demanding career to go back to basics and live off the land while helping teach others about self-sufficiency.

Success can be measured in so many different ways, and the variety of fields our former students end up in is testament, in part, to the broad education they receive at RGS.

So, the answer to that former student's question is a resounding: "No, we want to hear from all of you."

As a parent of former and current RGS students, I know just how inspirational past pupils' stories can be to those preparing to leave full-time education, unsure of what they want to do with their lives.

In this edition, our students can read about the careers of everyone from a police officer to a poet, special effects expert and martial arts champions. We happen to feature a distinguished scientist too.

We hope students from all walks of life will be joining us at our RGS Sixties reunion in July, which you can read about on page nine. As valued members of our extended RGS family, all can be assured of a warm welcome.

Every former RGS student now automatically becomes a member of our Old Rips alumni society. You no longer have to pay a joining or membership fee. If you would like to be put on our mailing list, please contact us on the Old Rips email address on page five.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,  
Ruth Savage

# Where are they now?

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



Amazing opportunity: Emma

**Emma Hartley** (Left RGS 2015) I joined RGS in sixth form and have just moved to Sheffield University to study biology, after being inspired by Dr Linklater and many other teachers. My experiences at Ripon Grammar School have given me the confidence to embrace an amazing opportunity. I have recently signed up to the challenge of raising £3,000 for the charity Dig Deep by climbing Kilimanjaro in August 2016. I believe it is really important to support people in all walks of life and to explore the world. Dig Deep supports communities in south west Kenya by providing toilets and clean water, in an attempt to improve sanitation and reduce the spread of water-related diseases that take so many lives. There is currently a drought in Kenya, further reducing the much-needed supply of essential resources like water. Therefore these communities are reliant on charities like Dig Deep more than ever. If you would like to support this non-profit charity you can donate to my fundraising page at: <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/emmahartley1>. For more information, please see [digdeep.org.uk](http://digdeep.org.uk)



I'm climbing Kilimanjaro because clean water is a right not a luxury

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**Peter Williams** (Left RGS 1989) I loved my time at RGS, where I was deputy head boy and took Greek, Latin and music for A-Level so that my largest class size was three. I particularly appreciated the inspirational teaching of Mr Rowland, Miss Richardson and Mr Green. I went to Cambridge University to read classics and Hebrew, and stayed there for an MPhil and PhD researching an early translation of the Bible into Syriac. Apart from a brief residence in Aberdeen (2003-2007), where I became senior lecturer in theology, I've stayed in Cambridge since leaving RGS



Ancient text: Peter studying Codex Climaci Rescriptus, left, and in first year, above

and now am Warden (Director) of Tyndale House in Cambridge, which is an evangelical research centre containing Britain's largest library of the Bible ([www.tyndalehouse.com](http://www.tyndalehouse.com)).

I also coordinate the Hebrew course for anyone studying theology at Cambridge University. I combine a love for old languages, which I received at RGS, with research on the Bible. I find that, while leading a research institution, it's possible to study things which are far too complex for one individual to pursue and there's still plenty new to discover about the most studied book on the planet.

One of the projects I'm leading is trying to read a 1400-year old manuscript whose writing has been rubbed out. In the early middle ages when papyrus had become scarce and the invention of paper in the West was still centuries away there was a huge shortage of writing material. Consequently, if you found an old manuscript in a script or language you didn't use you would probably rub it out to put new writing on top, even if the underwriting contained parts of the Bible.

Now modern imaging techniques are enabling us to read faint text that was rubbed out over a millennium ago, sometimes even if all the ink has been removed.

I've been married to Kathryn for around 20 years, have two well-travelled children and would be happy to hear from anyone from my time at RGS. [pjw1004@cam.ac.uk](mailto:pjw1004@cam.ac.uk)

**Kirsty Graham** (Left RGS 2007) I can't believe it's been fifteen years since I first started at RGS, and seven since I left. In sixth form I was torn between studying psychology and media studies, finally choosing the former, I started at Newcastle University in 2007. The year after, I switched to media, communication and cultural studies and also learned an important life lesson - that things don't always go to plan, but also to follow what you really want to do. At uni I was lucky enough to become involved in Newcastle student radio, being voted Female Presenter of the Year and made deputy station manager in my final year. Just before I graduated, I secured a 12-week internship at Northern Film and Media which then turned into a full time job. This was a great first job and gave me lots of insight into the industry, from production, location and crewing for TV shows such as Vera, to talent development workshops with BBC and Film4. In 2012 I moved back to Yorkshire, to work on a

Follow what you want to do: Kirsty Graham today, left and at school, right



£7.5 million investment fund for film and TV at Screen Yorkshire. Over two years I helped administer funding for projects like Peaky Blinders as well as being involved in several film development schemes. In 2014 I briefly went back to radio, working on several in-store radio stations to develop their brand and script adverts, before securing a job at ITV in Leeds. I now work as a schedule coordinator on ITVBe, building the day's programming and working closely with the channel strategy and transmission teams. The move to ITV has been great and more than four years after I graduated I've finally got a permanent position - anyone planning to work in media should be aware that many jobs are on a fixed-term contract basis. My time at RGS was invaluable in giving me the tools and confidence to go on to university and the world of work, I was very lucky to have teachers like Mr Fell, who was so inspiring and Dr Grime, who taught me a lot about self-discipline. I wouldn't change a moment about my time there or since, and you can't say more than that.



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# Where are they now?



**In tune: brothers Andrew (front row, left) and Stephen (right) in the school orchestra in 1964. Dave Cotson is behind**

**Andrew Orton** (Left RGS in 1964) Having won an open scholarship, I went to the Royal College of Music in London and was lucky enough to study violin with Leonard Hirsch and Antonio Brosa. The three years there flew by and in 1967 I joined the then BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra as a rank and file 2nd violin. Fortunately, promotions followed very quickly and having been principal 2nd for a couple of years I then was promoted to associate leader where I remained from 1974 until 2006. I enjoyed numerous foreign tours with the orchestra and have given concerts all over Europe, Hong Kong and South America. I have also played and often lead the orchestra with many of the well known conductors over the last forty years and remember with great affection leading Bruckner 7 and also playing the Bach double in Ripon Cathedral in the early Eighties. The Proms have always been the highlight of any musician's life and I have performed at the Royal Albert Hall almost every year for the last 49 years. Sadly tempus fugit (apologies to Mr Rowlands, R.I.P.) and I 'retired' in 2006 but have spent the last ten years freelancing with the BBC Philharmonic, playing for the Gubbay orchestra in Manchester all over the North, and also enjoyed playing the northern part of the Anton and Erin dance shows. Time now for more walking (had a hip done), more cycling and lots of lovely holidays with my wife who I met at the BBC 27 years ago. I will always remember Ripon and its fabulous grammar school, cathedral and sporting facilities on Studley Road. Sadly we don't get back often enough, but may well remedy that in future years.



**Band of brothers: Andrew Orton, above, in 2004 leading the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra for Yan Pascal Tortelier**

**Mike Burnett** (left RGS 1981) I spent two years in the sixth form of RGS after getting my O Levels from Bedale High School. After obtaining my A levels at Ripon I studied business at the University of Bradford for three years, before joining Touche Ross (now part of Deloitte) as a trainee accountant in Manchester. Upon qualification as a chartered accountant in 1987 I transferred with Touche Ross to their London office. In 1989 I joined MediMedia, a privately owned international healthcare communications company, working in the finance group at the corporate office in London until 2001. I then relocated to New Jersey to become the chief financial officer of the US division of the company. I departed MediMedia in early 2015 to become the chief financial officer of PDR, which is similarly a New Jersey-based healthcare communications business.



**Working in New Jersey: Mike Burnett, pictured centre and circled in school picture of lower sixth in 1980, came to RGS from Bedale High School**



**Stephen Orton** (Left RGS in 1966). I went on to study the cello at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. I had a lot of support from the school's music master Philip Miles and must mention Eric Kelsey who invited me to play chamber music at his house on Saturday evenings. My parents encouraged my brother and I from the age of seven to learn an instrument and had no idea what would happen as we've both had a career in music. I didn't have the same aptitude for learning at school but excelled at French (thanks to Jim Crowe) and also cricket, taking ten wickets for 21 against Pocklington for the under 13s. Would I have played for Yorkshire if music had not taken over? Having studied at the Guildhall School of Music for four years, I took up a principal cello job in the Bournemouth Sinfonietta and had a string quartet with members of the orchestra. I joined the English Chamber Orchestra and enjoyed many recordings with them playing often at the Aldeburgh Festival. I moved on to the Delmé String Quartet, which was resident at Lancaster University, and supplemented my income playing with other orchestras and doing film sessions, including James Bond films, Harry Potter, Gladiator and even, more recently, some episodes of Downton Abbey. For the last thirty years I've been principal cello with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, playing and touring most months of the year and playing in the great concert halls of the world, including Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall in New York, Suntory Hall, Tokyo, Theatre Colon, Buenos Aires, Musikverein in Vienna, Berlin Philharmonic, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and Lincoln Center in Washington. My passion has always been Chamber Music and I joined the Chilingirian String Quartet three years ago and combine work with the Academy of SMF.

**His illustrious musical career has taken Stephen Orton, left, all over the world, including New York, Sydney, Tokyo, Berlin and Vienna**



**The RGS cricket team of 1966/67. Andrew Orton is circled left**

**Dave Cotson** (Left RGS 1966) I started at RGS in 1959 and immediately realised that my life would never be the same again. I was in 1A, whose form room was big school - now the library. Over the years I was allowed to experience a privileged and very different life than I had been used to, with excellent teachers and facilities. I learned to play rugby and the clarinet and I joined the school choir, orchestra and the Combined Cadet Force. In the latter I managed to get gliding licences and it was my initial intention to be a commercial pilot but I failed my final medical examination. I then moved to Liverpool to study and after three years qualified as a secondary school science teacher, starting at a boys' school near the city centre. In 1975 I was appointed head of science at the school and subsequently became deputy head. In 1983 all of the Catholic secondary schools in Liverpool were reorganised and I was appointed head of physics and head of sixth form at a mixed comprehensive in the south of the city. I eventually left schools and went to teach in two colleges of further education, teaching advanced maths and physics. In 2003 I decided on a fundamental change and



**Time to travel: Dave pictured with his wife, Madeleine, at Uluru in Australia**

## CONTACT US

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We would love to hear your news and views and find out what you're up to now

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Deputy editor:

Nicola Woolfenden

left teaching and entered the charity sector. I started as a trust and foundation fundraiser at a local hospice and worked there for five years until I was given the opportunity to become head of fundraising at the North West Air Ambulance. I stayed there for three years and then left to join a large national charity looking after people with autism, including a sheltered house in Priest Lane, Ripon. This position allowed me to travel extensively around Britain with schools, housing and centres in Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland all requiring funding. I finally retired in 2013 but have gone back to the hospice as a volunteer and I continue to be the chairman of a large social club in Liverpool, a position I have held for 25 years. I have been married to a retired secondary school head teacher for 35 years and have a son who is a senior solicitor in St Helens and a daughter who is a head of year at a large secondary school in Wigan. My other main hobby now is supporting Liverpool Football Club where I have been a season ticket holder for 36 years. I am helping arrange a reunion of people who left the school in the Sixties in the summer. If you are interested please let me know on davecotson@hotmail.com.

SEE PAGE NINE FOR DETAILS OF RIPON GRAMMAR SCHOOL'S BIG REUNION EVENT FOR ALL THOSE AT SCHOOL IN THE SIXTIES

## Where are these staff members now?

We tracked down two former teachers to find out what they are up to now. We would love to hear from others in the photograph, below, taken in 1991

**Ben Lister** (Head of classics RGS 1989-2003)  
Do you remember Mr Lister who taught Latin, gave away 10p rewards for random moments of inspiration among his students, did the school plays, and, with the redoubtable Miss Richardson and support from the ageless Mr Garvey, attempted to inculcate classical learning into the bemused bucolic denizens of North Yorkshire? If not, it's probably time you moved on to the next article. I have been asked to tell you what I have done since. I can't think why. Well, taught a few thousand more students for starters. And the rewards have gone up to 20p - such are the inflationary pressures upon the philanthropists of this world.

There are always unexpected changes. With large, well-staffed and well-funded music and drama departments at Portsmouth Grammar School (where I am head of classics) there has been little scope for me to do much to help them. So I have taken my experience outside the school and have been directing musicals for an amateur company in Fareham where I live - mostly classics like *Oliver*, *The Sound of Music*, *King & I*. The latter won a stack of awards at our equivalent of the BAFTAs down on the South Coast. And all this, thanks to cutting my teeth on RGS productions. I continue to act as well, everything from serious drama such as *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* to Agatha Christie adaptations. However, perhaps my greatest claim to fame was being declared joint winner of the Times Carol Competition, with a light-hearted piece entitled *The Noisy Stable* in 2013. This carol came directly out of the annual carols I used to write for the junior choir at RGS for the carol service. I wrote it shortly after arriving in Portsmouth, intending to offer it to the school choir but, like so many of my projects, it lay gathering dust for years and I sent it off at the last moment for the competition almost ten years after I wrote it. Well, sometimes things come off! I am now writing a children's musical which I am excited about. You never know. If you want to hear the carol (mine's the second of the two on the video) go to:

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/competitions/article3942044.ece>

**Making music: Ben Lister, right, and circled in second row of main photo**



**Full steam ahead: former physics teacher and deputy head Mike Wallace, pictured circled in the bottom row of main 1991 picture. He says: "This photograph (on the left) shows me pretending to be an engine driver. The locomotive is steam though." Below, Mr Wallace pictured in 1977 on one of his many school camping trips in the Lake District, when he gave up his Whitsun holidays to accompany the Cadet Force on their training expeditions**

**Michael Wallace** (Physics teacher and deputy head at RGS 1958-1992) I completed my term of 34 years hard labour at RGS in July 1992. At that time I was engaged in four or five volunteer activities - some of them, like working for the examination board in Manchester, with educational connections and some not. I had been a member of the Friends of the National Railway Museum organisation which has supported the NRM in York since it was established in 1977 and I thought adding one more job would help pass the time. Working for one morning a week in the Friends' office sounded reasonable. Little did I realise that within six months I would be occupied for two or three days each week with other work to be done at home. Gradually my other tasks came to a natural conclusion so I was able to concentrate on the Friends

of the NRM. For some years I have been honorary secretary, membership secretary and the main editor of the quarterly magazine. The latter now runs to some 48 pages, A4 size, with many illustrations. Much of the work is routine, perhaps even boring - arranging meetings, fixing agendas, writing minutes, sending and replying to letters and (increasingly) emails - but there are many 'red letter' days when interesting things are happening at the NRM. Perhaps a new extension of the museum is being opened or a new exhibition is being launched. I am fortunate to be invited to many of them. Often well-known people from all walks of life are involved and in that connection I have had the pleasure of exchanging brief words with some of them. Perhaps, one of these days, I will retire again.

**Extract from Old Riponian magazine on Mr Wallace's retirement, 1992:**

*"Above all else it is by his proper management of his department that we must remember him. A number of very distinguished physicists began their lives' work in his laboratories - one of them being now a professor at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute for Science and Technology, another a Fellow of New College, Oxford.*

*A list of his activities - too long to catalogue descriptively - show a gradual development from the supportive junior member of staff in the 1960s to the deputy head whose hands were on the reins of the curriculum in the 1980s. In early times he joined, and eventually led, the holidays and the skiing trips abroad, provided expert lighting for the school play, the Christmas parties, the sixth form dances. His passion for seeing things done as professionally as possible, as well as his appreciation of athletics, placed him prominently at the starting line of all the sports day races, the man with the starting gun—a task he maintained right up to his retirement. For several years he also gladly gave up his Whitsun holidays to accompany the Cadet Force's arduous training camps in the Lake District. He was even able to persuade his least mechanically or electronically-minded colleagues to enter the new world of information technology.*

*None of us who either worked with him or was taught by him (or both!) can have failed to notice his passion not only for machines and any kind of operating system but more particularly his concern for their proper and most efficient use. When he recited an alleged dictum of Lord Rutherford - "There is physics; everything else is merely stamp-collecting" - he was not teasing; physics has been at the heart of his work and his personal occupations."*

## Goodbye, Mr Garvey

Many past pupils will have fond memories of PE and classics teacher Mr Mike Garvey, who came from St Bede's School in Manchester to join RGS in 1984.

Mr Garvey has made many appearances in the Old Riponian school magazine down the years, not least for his involvement in school rugby tours, which took him everywhere from North Wales to Cornwall.

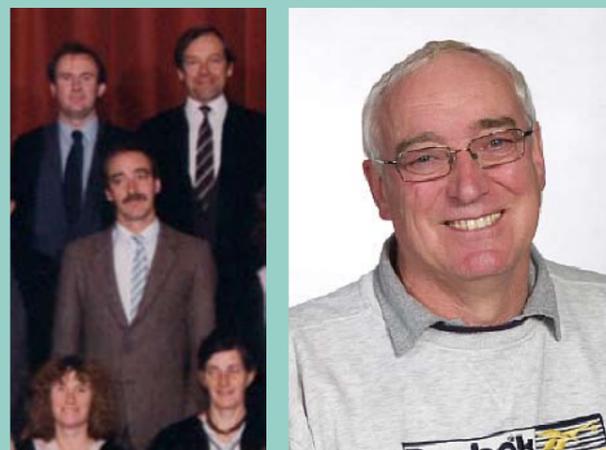
He was also a member of the support team when RGS got to the semi-final of the BBC's national radio Top of the Form competition in 1986.

Renowned for being a good sport, he took part in 1988's end-of-term debate in the guise of Fred Trueman. And he volunteered for many school trips, including the RGS ski trip

to Vermont, USA, in 1997 when the worst snow storm for 25 years hit the area. One metre of snow fell in 24 hours and the airport was closed for two days. Thankfully, although three of the party ended up in wheelchairs after suffering minor injuries, everyone returned home safely.

Headmaster Martin Pearman said: "Mr Garvey is going to be much missed by many former students who responded well to his coaching, coaxing and cajoling. As a teacher of both boys' PE and classics, the like of him will not be seen again I am sure. His commitment to PE and extra-curricular games has been immense.

"Our best wishes go to him and his family for a long and happy retirement. I am sure he will follow the school's sports fixtures in the future, secure in the knowledge of the foundation he has laid over the last 32 years."



**Then and now: PE and classic teacher Mike Garvey pictured, left, in 1989, and, right, more recently**

Amelia Tearle, who left RGS in 2010, describes her working life in the London Metropolitan Police Service

# A LONDON calling

When I moved on from Ripon Grammar School to study history at Jesus College, Cambridge, it was with no real plan or future-life strategy. It was only during fourth year management studies, which in all honesty was more an excuse to stay on in Cambridge for another year than anything else, that I worked out what it was I wanted to do.

Buoyed by a diet of far too many crime dramas in my adolescence, and a romanticised desire to be like Sandra from *New Tricks*, I joined the Met Police in September 2014.

A few short months out of Cambridge, and I found myself stood at 7:30 in the morning, in a cold and dark car park of a London suburb recently described by James Corden as 'almost the armpit of England'. In an ill-fitting police uniform, and stood to a poorly-executed attention, I was on parade being inspected alongside the rest of my class at training school. No doubt we caused endless amusement to the train-loads of commuters rattling by. This was a daily ritual throughout the twelve weeks of our training, and suffice to say, putting my hair in a neat bun is not one of my strengths. Neither is ironing.

Training school complete, and raring to fight crime on the streets of London, I 'passed out' at Hendon in January 2015. Now a fully-fledged police officer, sort of, I was posted to Kensington and Chelsea Borough, as a response team officer answering emergency calls. Our shifts of 'earlies', 'lates' and 'nights' were filled with a huge variety of calls, many of which were a far cry from chasing criminals and other more typical ideas of police work.

*'There can be a real thrill in identifying a suspect or securing a conviction'*



Passing out parade, above, and at work, top. School days, below



On a call to an elderly man suffering from a mental health crisis, my colleagues and I discovered the only way to calm him down, while we waited what felt like an eternity for an ambulance, was to read him his favourite extracts from the Bible. In another bizarre episode, I found myself walking through Notting Hill in uniform with a small dog on one arm and an elderly lady on the other. Pets seemed to be something of a theme, and I once spent an entire afternoon re-housing a cat after its owner died with no next of kin. This was made particularly difficult as the first charity I persuaded to take the cat subsequently refused

when it transpired that the cat only had one eye.

Although I enjoyed my time on the response team, placements in the criminal investigation department (CID), helped me to determine that my true ambition lies in the detective world. As such, I removed myself from the Fast Track graduate promotion scheme on which I had entered policing, and am hoping to pursue a career as a detective instead.

I currently work in the borough's 'main office' CID, which deals with a wide variety of more serious crime, including burglary, robbery, grievous bodily harm, and sexual assaults. I have a number of crimes to investigate, and it is my responsibility

to put together all the evidence available, such as CCTV, forensic evidence and witness accounts. It's incredibly frustrating at times, but there can be a real thrill in identifying a suspect, or securing a charge or conviction.

Each day is different and extremely unpredictable. In one shift I could be attending the scene of a serious incident, discussing ways to make the court process less daunting with a domestic violence victim, or interviewing a suspect. Particularly memorable was an interview of a young man heavily involved in youth-violence. I watched him beg his incensed mother not to show his nan images of him wielding a machete.

The Met offers vast opportunity through the seriousness, frequency, and variety of crime which we deal with and I hope in the future to join one of our specialist units, which range from murder teams to serious organised crime to counter terrorism units.

I would be more than happy to be contacted by anyone considering a career in policing, whether you are at school, university, or are considering moving into policing from another career. My contact details can be reached through [ameliatearle@gmail.com](mailto:ameliatearle@gmail.com)



Those were the days: the striking Sixties architecture of the entrance hall at Ripon Grammar School

## Swinging back to the Sixties

Were you a student at Ripon Grammar School in the Sixties? Or do you know anyone who was? Former students are getting together for a Sixties reunion at the school on July 2, 2016, to include a tour of the buildings and new facilities, including the new sports hall, humanities block and boarding extension, followed by an early evening function with food and bar.

There will also be old photographs from the period on display.

One of the organisers, Dave Cotson, who left RGS in 1966, originally came up with the idea to mark the 50 years

The search is on for former students  
Ruth Savage reports

since he and his old school friends took their A levels and finished school.

But, following interest from other years, the event has now been opened up to those who attended RGS during the whole of the decade which brought us the Beatles, Woodstock and the Moon landing.

"It's a shame that we didn't have the current communication facilities we now have in the Sixties. I am sure many of us would have kept in

touch far more than we were able to," says Mr Cotson, who is hoping to track down as many former pupils as possible.

If you would like to meet up with old school friends again at the event, please contact Mr Cotson on [davecotson@hotmail.com](mailto:davecotson@hotmail.com).

And if you know anyone who attended RGS in the Sixties, please let them know about this special occasion.



## Scholarship legacy

THE family of former RGS head boy and war hero John Dean has set up a scholarship fund in his memory following his death in January, aged 95.

John, who featured in the last edition of *Clocktower*, died peacefully at home in Surrey, with family. He is believed to have been the oldest of our Old Rips RGS alumni society members.

The John Dean Fund will help pay towards scientific school or university studies for girls in India who wouldn't otherwise be able to afford it.

John was head boy at Ripon Grammar School in 1939 and studied chemistry at Birmingham University, going on to take an MSc in chemical engineering at Birbeck College after the war. John was one of the first Royal Navy officers trained in radar and served alongside Prince Philip in the Far East. An expert in growing vanilla, he founded a vanilla industry in southern India, establishing it as a crop alongside tea and coffee.

A plumber's son, he told *Clocktower* magazine last year: "I owe everything to RGS. Without it I could never have achieved the things I have done. It lifted my whole family."

He is survived by his sister Barbara, two daughters Margaret and Rosemary and grandchildren Tim and Zoe.

"He had a lifelong love of India and was also a great believer in education," says daughter Margaret.



## Lansdowne Club special offer

FORMER RGS students aged between 18 and 20 can now join the prestigious Lansdowne Club in Mayfair, London, at a reduced rate. The club has a lively under-35s social group with regular popular events such as balls, tastings, moveable feasts and quizzes. Members also have access to a state-of-the-art gym, exercise studio, steam room, swimming pool, squash courts and fencing salle as well as bars and restaurants. Bedrooms and function rooms can be hired at preferential rates and members also have access to more than

250 reciprocal clubs worldwide. Once recommended by the Headmaster, our school leavers are entitled to apply for seven years' membership for a one-off payment of £700, with no joining fee, which would last until their 25th birthday.

Normally new members must be proposed and seconded by other members and normal membership for over-21s includes a £1,100 entrance fee followed by an annual subscription of around £585.

# POETRY

## in emotion

A bereaved RGS schoolboy who found solace in literature is now a professor of poetry at a Tokyo university. He tells **Ruth Savage** how he coped after losing both parents as a teenager and about the new life he has made for himself in Japan

**A**s a troubled, rebellious but remarkably bright teenager, Dr Paul Hullah confesses he lashed out at his devoted parents, ridiculing them for their poor education. It is something he still feels guilty about today.

In a life marred, sadly, by heartbreak and tragedy, his love of words and language provided some solace.

His mother died when he was just 14-years-old, his father two years later. An only child, Dr Hullah only discovered by chance, aged nine, that Mary, a factory worker, and Bill, a farm manager, had adopted him as a baby.

His childhood, he admits, sounds like a particularly unbelievable cheap Victorian thriller. That probably explains why, when he was a student, a girl once slapped him across the face, accusing him of trying to make a fool of her when he told her his story as he tried to chat her up in a bar.

"Maybe that's why I put so much into creative writing. Perhaps, since being slapped in the face, it became a way of dealing with it without being too obvious or brutal," he laughs.

On reflection, he adds: "I think I tried for many years to deny my parents' death had anything to do with my poetry but, looking back, it did define and shape who

I am. I suppose we express things in art that we don't in conversation. Language can be such an empowering thing."

As a sensitive child, growing up on an isolated farm near Bedale, he was used to retreating into his own imagination, reading novels from the age of five and writing his own stories.

Eventually, he says, the world of academia became almost like a family to him and he went on to have five books of poetry published: "Literature has remained my best, most faithful and patient friend," he says.

His critically acclaimed work contains themes of love, loss and longing and he once won praise from novelist Iris Murdoch for writing 'fine poems, that touch me deeply.' Subtle, moving and honest, his most recent work reflects on the tragic death of his Japanese wife Akiko seven years ago.

The streetscape that Dr Hullah looks out on now from his two-storey apartment, in a suburb halfway between the two biggest cities in Japan, is a far cry from the rural landscape of North Yorkshire where he grew up.

Having lived in the Far East for 24 years, where he is professor of poetry at Tokyo's Meiji Gakuin University, he has immersed himself in the culture, eating local dishes of rice and fish and speaking Japanese every day.



Brave new world: Dr Hullah on Enoshima beach, near his home in Yokohama, Japan. Below, performing and right, at RGS

## FAVOURITE TEACHERS

"ALL my teachers were incredible when they heard my father had died. But I had made English literature my focus and the three teachers of English more or less became parental in their role towards me. Chris Horton, Graham Finch and Anne Carrick were all similar in that they were all passionate about what they were doing but they were very different in approach. Chris Horton, with his wry, incisive wit, was a lovely, gentle, placid guy. We called him Hippy Horton because he was so laid back. Graham Finch, with his confrontational febrile intellect, was more of a thriving social activist type, always looking for fresh angles, a fantastic teacher. Steadfast Anne, with her anchoring spirituality and generous heart, introduced me to a lot of poetry, such as Hopkins and Christina Rossetti. They each encouraged me to challenge and reassess past notions, and to explore and engage with new ideas in the lines of the literature we read and in life itself. In my darkest days, my confused fog of arrogant adolescent angst, they showed me ways to imagine richer, more meaningful, better versions of life. And they assured me that such futures were achievable."

But, describing himself as a 'working class chancer from Northern England', he still regularly returns home to the place where his love of poetry and literature was nurtured as a schoolboy.

Grateful for the education he received at Ripon Grammar School, and keen to give something back, Dr Hullah, who is about to publish his latest book on the work of Victorian poet Christina Rossetti, is now hoping to inspire today's students by sponsoring a poetry prize at his former school.

His family moved to the small cathedral city of Ripon after his father suffered an accident at work, and, as a result, lost his job and their home on the farm. They were loving parents, says Dr Hullah, who recalls stumbling across his adoption paperwork during the move. It came as a shock: "I remember crying to Mum, that she must be disappointed. She said 'It's the opposite, we chose you.' When Dad came home I told him all I wanted was a normal family."

His father told him something then that he has never forgotten: "When you get older you will realise there is no such thing as a normal family."

Both Mary and Bill had left school before they turned 16: "They were not educated, but they really did love me. They couldn't have children of

their own and poured a lot of love and affection onto me," says Dr Hullah.

Mary and Bill encouraged his reading: "They bought me books like *Treasure Island*, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Black Beauty*. My reading ability was outstanding."



Relocating to Ripon, where his father found work as a gardener, turned out to be a fortunate move, says Dr Hullah. The family lived in a bungalow in the grounds of a large house where his mother worked as a maid.

Bullied at primary school because he was an outsider, Paul, who admits he was a troublesome child, fought back with words: "I was good at coming back with clever remarks," he says.

He was soon befriended by the son of his mother's employers, who, at 15, was six years older: "He became like a big brother, taking me under his wing, introducing me to rock music, poetry and more mature

books."

The rest of the family also encouraged him: "They saw I had an inquisitive mind and encouraged me to aspire to the grammar school."

Once there, Paul mixed with children from a different social background: "Now I would think,

'So what?' but it was something I was very conscious of at the time. Coming home, it became clear my intellect was beyond my parents' and, I'm ashamed to say, I ridiculed them for that, in a childish, awful and wicked way. It was disgusting behaviour."

He still feels weighed down by guilt: "I used the fact they had been poorly educated against them. I behaved very badly. To this day, I feel awful about it."

Nevertheless, he thrived at grammar school: "It was the perfect environment. It encouraged learning and the pursuit of knowledge, empowering and changing me."

His father shielded him from most of the visibly distressing aspects of his mother's 14-month long battle with cancer but when she died, Bill was devastated: "It hurled him into a black despair. I railed against her death in a stupid, typically teenage way, blaming him for everything. I was incredibly unkind."

The pair had to leave the family bungalow and moved to a council flat: "We were two typical men, living together but not communicating." His father died shortly after being diagnosed with liver cancer two years later.

While he was in hospital, 16-year-old Paul went off the rails and was almost put into care, until the family of a school friend came to his rescue: "They said I could stay with them to do my A levels. They were incredibly kind," he says.

His teachers were also supportive: "They were all on my side. From then on, academia became my shepherd, in part, my family. I was just in love with language."

Inspired by everything from the lyrics of David Bowie and Marc Bolan to the works of T S Eliot and Gerard Manley Hopkins, he began to write poetry. And Christina Rossetti's work, full of inconsistencies and mysteries, particularly intrigued him.

While a student at the University of Edinburgh, he also worked as a music journalist and fronted a number of bands, one of which, Teenage Dog Orgy, was referred to as 'legendary' by the NME, with *Sounds* magazine describing Hullah as 'a silver-tongued devil'.

After gaining a first class degree and PhD, he was

## Homing

*In wintry rush I hear her call*

*My name from some place nice and new.*

*I do not dwell on where, or dwell at all,*

*For places do not save me; people do.*

*The long road back to hope lurks lined*

*With magic mirrors fibbing still*

*Of futures free of fates unkind,*

*But mirrors will not mend me; people will.*

encouraged by a tutor, who had taken him under his wing, to take up a university teaching post in Japan and concentrate on a career in academia. "I have known unfathomable kindness since my parents died," he says.

Japan opened up a whole new world: "When I arrived I might as well have landed on the Moon, it was so wonderfully new, so different to everything I had experienced. I loved it."

Sadly, his wife Akiko, a nurse, whom he married in 2006, was diagnosed with liver cancer in 2007 and died two years later, aged 40: "It was like being a boxer in the ring, getting up and being hit in the face again. I fell apart."

Dr Hullah's most recent book of poetry, *Homing*, published in 2011, grew out of this devastating experience and he now performs it at literary festivals: "It's about being cast out into what seems a dark, bad place. I had to find something meaningful in an incomprehensible series of events."

*'RGS was the perfect environment. It encouraged the pursuit of knowledge, empowering and changing me'*

Having fallen seriously ill when he neglected his own health after Akiko's death, Dr Hullah, who is now 52, says reaching the age of 50 was a turning point: "I just thought I was incredibly blessed, fortunate to still be here, and happy to be alive."

He has no plans to return to live in the UK: "I love my job. I have no game plan now apart from trying to be useful to other people."

"For a long time I thought it was cool to be antagonistic, volatile, grumpy and miserable. I was arrogant and conceited when young and thought it wasn't cool to be anything else. Now I think it is really cool to be happy and gentle and kind, to be loved and be liked, that is what I say to young people."

*\*We Found Her Hidden: the Remarkable Poetry of Christina Rossetti will be published by Word Power Books this summer. Homing (Word Power, 2011).*

*Selected poetry: www.paulhullah.weebly.com*

*My truth will come and find me old,*

*Remind me how I once began.*

*Let winters wane beside my soul,*

*For winters cannot warm me; people can.*

*And everywhere I see her ghost:*

*That young girl's coat, a roadside bar,*

*A Spanish film, peach jam on toast,*

*For places are not haunted; people are.*



Golden boy: Matt Clare

## Badminton star wins doubles gold

Matt Clare, who left RGS in 2015, won a gold medal at the England National Under-19 championships in February alongside doubles partner Ben Lane.

It was a fitting finale to a junior badminton career that has seen Matt win three national age group titles and European Championship gold. In addition to winning gold in the men's doubles in the Under-19 Championships, Matt won silver in the mixed doubles event.

He and Lane only lost one set on their way to the men's doubles title in Milton Keynes.

With Lane being a steady player, who rarely makes mistakes, Matt is renowned for going all out to create opportunities: "Ben's the steady one and I'm the one who will win points," says Matt.

The top seeds beat the third and fourth ranked players Callum Hemming and Johnnie Torjussen 21-16, 12-21, 21-5 in the final.

Now studying at Loughborough University, Matt, of Sutton Grange, Ripon, combines his studies with training and working towards progressing his sporting ambitions.

He took A levels in chemistry, biology, geography and PE at RGS, having started playing badminton when he was eight years old.

"My dad played for Kent so when we were old enough my sister and I went with him," he explains. Having joined a beginners' session at Harrogate Racquets Club, Matt was invited to Yorkshire trials and joined the World Class Start programme aged just 11.



An Oscar-winning special effects expert returned to RGS to talk to students, staff and parents. Sarah French reports on how he forged a glittering career in the film industry

Oscar-winning computer expert Dr Mark Hills, who left Ripon Grammar School in 1999, has revealed that his experience of film started at RGS, where he helped with sound and lighting for school productions.

Dr Hills, who has worked on Paddington, The Avengers and Harry Potter movies, was back in his old school hall to present awards to students for their success at GCSE and A level, where nearly 72% of A level grades were A\*-B, putting the school in the Telegraph Top 100 schools in England.

As head of systems at Framestore, a British visual effects company based in London, he was part of the team that won both the Oscar and Bafta for best visual effects in 2014 for Gravity, a space-based movie starring George Clooney and Sandra Bullock.

Despite the best efforts of two of Hollywood's biggest stars, the real standout of the film was undoubtedly the stunning special effects achieved through Framestore's ground-breaking computer graphics.

Mark and his team worked closely with director Alfonso Cuaron to bring the tale of two stranded astronauts to the big screen, overcoming the difficulty of representing gravity, or the relative lack of it, in space through digital technology. As a result, 80% of the film is composed of digital shots, produced almost entirely inside a cramped studio, with much of the work invisible to the audience.

Dr Hills told those attending the school's annual Speech Day how his experience of film began when he was at school and used to help out with the technical work behind the scenes: "I spent quite a lot of time making short films with my friend Chris McAleese (who has gone one to be an assistant cameraman in the film industry), things like music videos and kung fu style fights, anything we could challenge ourselves with. I used to DJ lower school discos and also got involved



*"I have really fond memories of Ripon Grammar School"*



# How to make it in the movies

with sound and lighting for school productions. It was more that path that led me into film than the academic," he explained. "Back then, films like Toy Story had just been released and I had a vague idea that I'd like to work in computer animation, but it was something I didn't really think would be possible."

The son of former RGS maths teacher, Greta Hills, Dr Hills went on to complete a degree and PhD in computer science at the University of Nottingham: "What I did know when I finished RGS was that I wanted to work in computers in some way." He worked as a nightclub and student radio DJ as well as for the radio station Galaxy FM (now Capital FM), followed by stints at Kerrang and Kiss FM: "This got me a taste of the technology and creativity that happens there."

He also travelled the country covering music festivals as a professional photographer during the summer months. Taking photographs of the weird



Making his mark: Dr Hills, top left with Headmaster Martin Pearman and chair of governors Dr Peter Mason. Right, with his Oscar and Bafta and, left, while at school. Above, stills from the Paddington movie and Gravity, starring George Clooney and Sandra Bullock

and wonderful characters he saw in nightclubs and at festivals gave him an insight into the art of framing a shot, he said.

He told students: "I'm a computer programmer and software engineer but instead of applying my skills to finance, building apps or tedious accounting software I went into the film industry. It was studying computer science at university that gave me a golden ticket in.

"I found my niche in the film industry because it was something I really enjoyed. I loved working in radio but the film industry is very strong in the UK and the technical challenges can be much bigger, so it was the logical next step.

"It's about looking at anything you are really interested in and what captures your imagination then peeling back the layers to find all the different places where you can apply your skills and mix and match.

"At Framestore, we work for people like Warner Brothers, Universal and Marvel. I get to work with some of the best creative people in the world on amazing projects. The level of technological challenge we get in the film industry is very high and I can have quite a degree of say in making it work. I'm responsible for a £10m super computer and for building the software for driving it.

"Despite the job as a programmer, we can be

quite 'hands on' when it comes to the actual film production and we have to solve a lot of very different problems. I think that's what makes it a lot of fun."

He said he had really fond memories of RGS: "It's been fantastic to come back and see what's been going on."

He encouraged students to get involved in things outside their studies: "I think, for me, the great thing about extra curricular activities was they enabled me to truly find what it was I was interested in, then I tricked people into paying me for doing what I enjoy."



*‘If we don’t do something drastic, the Earth is going to get warmer and warmer. Things are starting to happen. If everyone starts living like present day Americans we are doomed’*



Schoolboy curiosity launched a stratospheric career: Prof Alan Plumb in conversation, back at RGS

# Global warning

World-renowned ozone scientist Professor Alan Plumb turned his back on the chance to study at Cambridge because, as a railway porter’s son with a strong northern accent, he found it too elitist. **Ruth Savage** caught up with him on a return visit to his old school

**A**lan Plumb vividly recalls stopping to watch the trout swimming in North Yorkshire’s River Ure as he cycled to school every day from the age of about 11 years old: “I remember wondering about the flow of water and how it moved around the rocks. It intrigued me,” he says.

Although he wasn’t to realise it at the time, this naturally curious young schoolboy’s preoccupation with the water was to ignite a fascination for fluid dynamics that would eventually lead to him becoming one of the world’s most eminent atmospheric scientists, winning international recognition for his ground-breaking work on the Earth’s ozone layer and monsoons.

The son of a railway porter, Prof Plumb, who grew up in Ripon, turned his back on the chance to study at Cambridge because, as a working class lad with a strong northern accent, he felt ill at ease in such an elitist environment.

That was Cambridge University’s loss. Prof Plumb, who rose to head the meteorology and physical oceanography department at the world-renowned Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has been described as the most important theorist in the science of the stratosphere.

And he was recently presented with the prestigious Jules Charney Award by the American Meteorological Society for his fundamental contributions to our understanding of the atmosphere and oceans.

Some of the latest NASA and National Science Foundation-funded research he has been involved in is helping provide a better understanding of why sea ice continues to grow in a warming world. The findings, by Prof Plumb and fellow MIT and University of Washington scientists, suggest a lack of ozone could explain why sea ice is shrinking in the northern hemisphere while growing in the southern hemisphere,

the response of the ocean to ozone depletion involving a complex process of cooling and warming.

Currently working towards predicting when we can expect Antarctica to begin warming, Prof Plumb returned to the UK when he was seconded to the University of Reading recently.



Climate change protest: Prof Plumb says public and political opinion has changed. ‘There is an awareness this is serious’

But before going back to the States, he took the opportunity to return to the place where his love of science began, re-entering the doors of his old school, Ripon Grammar, for the first time in 50 years.

It was a visit that stirred many memories. Having left Ripon in 1966 for Manchester University to study physics, followed by a PhD in astronomy, he recalls how the night sky in Ripon inspired him to find out more about our planetary system, reading about it in books from the school library.

“It was dark at Ure Bank Top, where I lived. You could see the Milky Way. The Sputnik went up in 1957 and we sent man into space in 1961. It was a pretty exciting time. I think we cheat kids today out of something really important by having all this light pollution. When you have a dark sky, like we had when I was a boy, you can see so much.”

His family wasn’t well off. Although his mother also ran a corner shop and off-licence from their home, they didn’t make much money.

In fact, Prof Plumb recalls his father returning home from work one day in the early Sixties, bursting with pride that he had earned as much as £10 that week: “We never owned a car, we used to have an outside bathroom and my parents didn’t have a phone until I got them one year later.”

The terraced house, where Alan grew up with his older brother, David, looked out on a brick wall, which hid the railway line, close to a concrete

works, with the Army camp at the end of the road: "It was a nice childhood. There were a lot of kids on the street and we played cricket and football all the time. I did a lot of fishing and we made rafts on the river, which always fell apart. It was relaxed," he says.

But education was a driving force: "It was so important to my parents," says Prof Plumb.

Both his mother and father had been forced to leave school early after their fathers died young. Prof Plumb's father worked in a brewery from the age of ten to support his four sisters. His mother, who was academically gifted, had to help run the family's pub, the Mason's Arms at Bishop Monkton, from the age of 14.

It was something she resented: "She made sure her sons got the best education they could get, she was obsessive about it," he says.

His father, who had a passion for growing prize chrysanthemums, was a huge influence: "He was a role model. He wanted us to be educated, but he would have been just as happy if we played cricket for England, he just wanted us to do well. What I liked about my dad was that he was so easy to get along with."

Alan, who was a singer in a teenage rock band performing Rolling Stones numbers, found many classes at school, including English literature and Latin, boring. He also confesses he occasionally found himself in the headmaster's office over minor misdemeanours. But, once he got to sixth form and could concentrate on science, he enjoyed his time at school. To their mother's delight, both Alan and his brother, who went on to study pharmacy, excelled academically.

It was after having won a scholarship to Manchester and gaining a first class honours degree that Alan was offered a place to study for a PhD at Cambridge. But he left shortly after meeting one of the academics he was to work under: "He was the most arrogant, pompous man. I went back to Manchester instead." Although, ironically, he has gone on to work at Cambridge on various projects since, the whole environment there felt alien to him. And it still does: "I had a pretty strong accent in those days, and I was pretty conscious of that. It was a snobby place. And it still is like that, although they will deny it. Kids who do get admitted from lower income backgrounds feel different."

Undeterred, he went on to enjoy a stellar career in meteorology, which took him all over the world. Having spent 13 years in Australia, he has been based in the States, where he has worked with NASA on aircraft experiments at altitudes of 20km, for the last 27 years.

It was his pioneering research on the ozone layer which won him international recognition. Following the discovery of the ozone hole, one fellow scientist working in the field commented: "As soon as each new Plumb paper became available other scientists would scramble to re-orient their research, doing their best to make use of Alan's new insights." When he was elected a Fellow of the prestigious Royal Society in 1998 for his ground-breaking work in this area, his mother was so proud, she contacted



*'Education was important. My mother made sure her sons got the best education they could get, she was obsessive about it'*

the Ripon Gazette but on the day the story went in, the big news of the week was that celebrated former England footballer Derek Kevan had visited the city.

Modest and unassuming about his own achievements, Prof Plumb laughs: "She wanted it splashed over the front page but it was relegated to about half an inch on the inside. She was furious."

Happy to remain in the background while letting his science speak for itself, he feels passionately about our need to get to grips with global warming: "If we don't do something drastic, the Earth is going to get warmer and warmer and by the end of this century, big things are going to happen. Things are starting to happen now," he says.

The big problem, he says, is that if China and India, whose economies are growing fast, start to emit as much Co2 and greenhouse gases as Western Europe and America, it will be a disaster: "But how can these countries tell China and India not to do what they did?"

While the scientific community is in agreement about the dangers, he is in little doubt that not enough is being done to stop us hurtling towards disaster: "But there are signs that most politicians are starting to take it more seriously. Public and political opinion has changed. There is an awareness that this is serious.

"People are making token efforts. But people have to stop using coal and oil, and that's not going to happen. If it's going to be fixed it has to be done by governments. The West has to set a good example. If everyone starts living like present day Americans we will all be doomed."

Now nearing retirement, the father-of-three, whose 19-year-old granddaughter Abby is studying environmental chemistry at MIT, says he still has some loose ends to tie up: "I am conscious that I shouldn't be exploring new ideas, but tidying up the old ones." He has taken up fishing again and planned to have a walk down by the river while in Ripon, over the bridge where he first used to ponder over the movement of the water. His curiosity, he says, is still what drives him on.

## RGS's Sunday Times hat trick

RIPON Grammar School has been named top performing state school in Yorkshire and the North-East for the third year in a row.

The rankings in The Sunday Times Parent Power guide, which highlights academic excellence, are determined by the percentage of entries gaining A\* to B grades at A level and A\* and A grades at GCSE. Now in its 23rd year of publication, Parent Power is widely acknowledged as the most authoritative survey of the UK's best schools.

Headmaster Martin Pearman said: "This is a tremendous



Next steps: (L-R back row) James Donaldson, Beth Abel, Matt Ford, Ryan Wood, Alfie Ashton, Flo Hall; (L-R front row) Max Vesty, Alex Elvidge, Jess Rutherford, Annabelle Blyton, Alanah Mansfield

## The new alumni

This group of students, who leave RGS at the end of May, are the latest to join the growing ranks of our alumni network. Like all former students of RGS, they will now automatically be offered free membership of our Old Rips alumni society, which no longer requires any joining or membership fees.

From taking up university courses overseas to careers with international companies and ambitions to work with endangered species, these upper sixth formers, who officially leave school on Friday May 27, are planning for a variety of pathways as they make final decisions about their futures.

Many have gained offers from top UK universities, including seven from Oxford and Cambridge. Other students are opting to go straight into careers by taking up apprenticeships.

Matt Ford, 17, of Carlton Hushwaite, has interviews for an IT apprenticeship with American multinational IBM and

Sarah French discovers where our latest leavers are heading

Capgemini, which employs 180,000 across 40 countries.

Beth Abel, 18, of Bedale, is staying closer to home to follow a family tradition of accountancy with local firm Kenneth Easby Ltd.

Alanah Mansfield, of North Stainley, admits to having an international outlook and is set to choose between university in Maastricht, in the Netherlands, and Madrid to read European law.

Alex Elvidge, 17, is another taking an unusual route having secured an offer at the national conservatoire of Wales, the Royal Welsh College of Music and

Drama, in Cardiff. The mezzo-soprano, from Kirby Wiske, went to the former Ripon Cathedral Choir School and sings in the cathedral choir and the National Youth Choir.

Alex, who also plays the violin, clarinet and piano, will study for a degree in musical performance.

Max Vesty, 17, of Arkendale, near Boroughbridge, is one of five students with offers from Cambridge University: "I've grown up around animals so it's what I've always wanted to do. I would like to spend some time working with endangered species in an animal park," said Max, who has an additional offer to read veterinary science at Liverpool.

He could be joined at Gonville and Caius College by Annabelle Blyton, 18, of North Stainley, who has an offer to read architecture, and Alfie Ashton, 17, of Winkley, who wants to be a criminal barrister after his law degree.

Ripon Grammar School head boy James Donaldson, 17, of North Stainley, wants to work in the bio-pharmaceutical industry after a degree in natural sciences at Clare College, Cambridge, and Ryan Wood, 17, of Burton Leonard, has an offer to read maths at St Catharine's College.

Flo Hall, who joined Ripon Grammar School sixth form from Thirsk School, and Jess Rutherford, 18, of Ripon, both have offers from Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University.

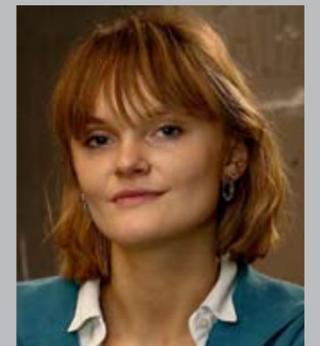
Flo will read history and Jess decided only a year ago to read theology after planning for law. She explained: "I realised theology's what I really enjoy and what I want to do. It's so fascinating and universal, touching social, political, geographical issues everywhere."

## Moving on up



WELL done to Anna Ferguson who is taking up a new position at Atkins, the largest engineering consultancy in Europe, as head of power networks. Anna, who featured on the cover of the last edition of Clocktower ('Why we need more female engineers') will lead a team of around 50 engineers. She retains her four day working week while she and her partner Andy, a teacher, share their baby daughter's childcare.

## Spotted



ACTRESS Hebe Beardsall, who left RGS in 2011 to study English literature at Durham University, played the gritty role of troubled prostitute Leone in the latest series of BBC TV's award-winning Happy Valley drama, starring Sarah Lancashire.

## In the news

A DAILY Telegraph article about boarding schools facing a steep learning curve as the independent sector becomes 'the sole preserve of the super-rich' - published on February 13—quotes Robin Fletcher, national director of the Boarding Schools' Association, who advises parents to: "Look at the 38 state boarding schools, where you pay only the boarding costs. There is a wide range, from Wymondham College, Norfolk, to Ripon Grammar School, in Yorkshire."

# MUD sweat & cheers

Waterlogged pitches didn't stop this year's annual Old Rips RGS alumni sports fixtures from taking place. Reports by **Jonny Frank, Toby Kinread, Hannah Hale** and **Helen Mackenzie**

**T**his year's winter reunion was held on Saturday, 19 December. Heavy rain in the preceding weeks had resulted in waterlogged grounds but following a last-minute pitch inspection by Mr Pearman, it was declared that the football could go ahead as planned. The hockey match was again held on the all-weather Astroturf and the netball teams were able to battle it out in the comfort of the sports hall. Refreshments in the school library were enjoyed by many and it was wonderful to see old friends catching up and reminiscing after the games.

The school was also delighted to host the Old Rips' rugby game which this year took place on a bright and crisp New Year's Eve.

It is always a pleasure to welcome both players and spectators - young and old - to these events and we look forward to seeing many more of you in 2016.

## RUGBY

Now in its third year, Old Riponians took the opportunity to catch up with old faces and represent their school in the annual Old Boys' rugby fixture. The match saw recent leavers, Old Boys (under 21s (U)), take on the wiser and unbeaten Old, Old Boys (over 21s (O)).

Before kick off, the usual intense warm ups took place, with banter at the forefront of any moves created and stretching only deemed necessary to pick up the one or two (hundred) dropped balls.

A quick huddle back in the PAV and a squeeze on the pitch before Old Boys, playing towards the clock tower and captained by Pete Marsden (U), were ready to kick off to Old, Old Boys, captained by Jonny Frank (O). With the weather on our side and an impressive attendance from the crowd, Andy, refereeing for free, blew his whistle.

The early exchanges saw the Old Boys keep hold of better possession and territory. A terrific tackle on Sam Watkinson (O), by his youngest sibling Guy (U), only added to the competitiveness from both sides. Measured play by scrum half George Foster (U) and a concerted effort from Miles Warriner (U) at number 8 to bring flair to the game, served to entertain throughout. After strong runs from Alex Reed (O) catching kicks at full

back, the tide began to turn. Thirty minutes in and Robert Barker (O), known for having 'all the gear, no idea', received a yellow card for 'hands in the ruck' after some good play by the Os. If anything, this inspired his side.

Another superb tackle, this time from Will Butterworth (O) using his head (who went on to injure his thumb later in the game (get well soon)) led to the flamboyant Warriner (U) receiving a dead leg, somewhat stifling the impact the U21s had from the back of the uncontested scrums. A knock on from Reed (O) with the try line at his mercy and a few more penalties awarded to the Os in quick succession, eventually proved fruitful with George 'North' Dobbins (O) crashing over in the corner on the stroke of half time.

**Half time score 5-0 to Os.**

After a close fought first half, the half time refreshments were well deserved and a few changes on both sides saw fresh legs coming on.

Ten minutes in and Joe Rowntree (O) burst through from the half way line in open play and evaded six tackles to drop down under the posts. More good play from the Os and a terrific bounce on Pete Marsden (U) by Graham Currihan (O) (much to the amusement of the mesmerized crowd), followed by an unselfish offload, resulted in try number three for the Os. The return kick off, taken well again by the immaculate Sahil Patel (O), saw a break from Sam Watkinson (O) through the middle of the pack, drawing and passing to Alec Porter (O) in support who offloaded again, this time to the prolific Reed (having scored in every Old Boys' battle), for a great team try. Another try from Paul Smith (O), cruising over the line after a trademark break, saw the margin open further. More possession from the kick

off, and a few 'pick and goes', notably from Matt Pickles (O) and Charlie Johnston (O), supported by the ever present and unselfish Will Park (O), provided the platform for the Old Boys' fly half, at his influential best, to execute a delightful cross field kick for the terrific Currihan (O) to catch and pass to Dobbins (O) for his second try.

At this point, the Us could be forgiven for giving up, however they were undeterred by the onslaught, raised their game and gained territory, only



Still smiling: Pete Marsden and Jonny Frank



# Winter reunion

for spring chicken, Rob Harrison (O), to gallop clear down the touch line after turnover ball and to seal the win with a sixth and final try for the Os.

The under 21s were not going to go away empty handed however, having seen a 15 man maul held just short of the line and the ball turned over shortly afterwards, the imperious Glenn May (U) received a clearance kick and returned at pace to slide through the O's defence, stopping ten metres short of the line, quick recycling of the ball and intelligent play exploiting the numbers on the right, led to a deserved try for man mountain, Alex Ellerby (U).

Final Score 32-5 to Os.

Man of the Match: Molloy.

Hand shakes and smiles all round, followed by team photos and that was that. A bottle of whiskey for the referee to say thank you for his time and good humour.

A big thank you to the school for allowing the fixture to go ahead and for the use of the nostalgic pavilion changing rooms. This is an open fixture for any ex-Ripon Grammar school students and serves as a focal point for old faces to catch up, whether that is watching or taking part in the match. This year saw the largest crowd yet and another crop of recent leavers taking part. Given the light-hearted nature and good spirits with which the game is played, this annual event will no doubt go from strength to strength for years to come.

## HOCKEY

The Old Riponians' hockey match was as popular as ever, with great attendance from both alumni players and spectators. Due to the enthusiastic turnout from various generations of Old Rips, it was decided that mixing up the teams would make for a better game of hockey. The teams put together were the RGS first XI and the generation of the 1992 North Yorkshire champions versus anyone in-between. It was a closely fought match with some fantastic teamwork from both sides. However the competitive edge of the sixth form team and their deadly combination with the 'Older' Rips left no gaps in their defence to give them a clean sheet. The strength in attack could not be matched by the opposition, resulting in a 3 - 0 win for the RGS First XI and 'Older' Rips. Many thanks go to Dick Edwards for volunteering his time to umpire - particularly in light of the pitch re-jig and lack of linesmen. Finally, enormous thanks go to those current RGS first XI team players who were able to attend for making the event a success.

## FOOTBALL

There certainly was no shortage of goals in the Old Rips' Day Football match 2015. With a number of the over 21s now experiencing the pressures of employment, not many were able to make it back for the match. The result was a rather dubious splitting up of those who could attend, making two teams which may be more appropriately named the 'just under 21s' vs the 'just over 21s'. The shortage of players was not the only obstacle to overcome. With the girls using the Astroturf for the hockey game, the wet

**Fantastic teamwork: RGS hockey players old and new, below**



**Good spirits: the under and over 21s are all smiles after their muddy match**

field was the only option for the footballers. It was no surprise that very little of the match was played down the left hand side of the pitch, which was so boggy and slippery that the wingers resembled amateur ice skaters. The rain died down however, and the players managed to soldier on despite the conditions. The match started off fairly evenly, with goals from the 'just over 21s' being answered quickly by goals from the 'just under 21s'. As the game went on however, it became clear that those extra months of life experience made the difference for the 'just over 21s' as a hat-trick from Jacob Lockwood and even a goal from Glenn May enabled

them to win the game 8-3. Spirits were high for all players at the end of the match despite the crushing defeat for the slightly younger ones and an amicable game of few fouls and only a couple of light-hearted jibes at the referee was wrapped up with refreshments in the library. Not all the usual players could come, the conditions were far from perfect and the quality of football was hardly Brazilian but there was certainly no shortage of fun.

TK

## NETBALL

With the building of our brilliant sports hall, netball has really taken off, both in school and in the Ripon community. Ever since the sports hall opened in 2009, a netball match between RGS students and Old Riponians has taken place on Old Rips' Day. This year was no different and, as the rain lashed down outside for the poor footballers and hockey players, we revelled in the smugness of knowing that, whether we won or lost, we would at least be dry.

Ripon City Netball Club provided us with two very Christmassy umpires - thank you to Kelly and Ashley Anderson.

The girls' team included Laura Mackenzie, Bethany Grimmer (c) Laura and Amy Crompton, Molly and Amelia Reed and Sophie Spick.

My Old Riponians' team was made up of me, Suzanne Rickard, Shona Fletcher, Amy Ellerker, Suzanne Clarke, Nicola Stubbs, Leigh Reed and Jackie Laugher. This team did include two parents of RGS students which, technically, does not an Old Riponian make, but needs must and all that - I was determined to field a team. Thank you for stepping in Jackie and Leigh.

It was a closely fought game, especially in the first two quarters but age and experience have to count for something and while the girls ran around like the fit young things they are, the Old Rips adopted the style of 'Launch it to the shooter, pop it in the net!' It worked a treat. The final score was Old Rips 19, RGS 12.

It was a lovely match to play in - good natured, encouraging and friendly. The tea and cake in the library after the match was most welcome.

If any Old Riponians are reading this and thinking 'Hmmm, I wouldn't mind playing a bit of netball...' please contact me on mackenzieh@ripongrammar.co.uk

HM

**Fun on the pitch: our footballers, below, played in boggy conditions**



**Rugby fans: Alison and Richard Reed with Izzy Harvey-Kelly. Below, the netball players stay dry in the sports hall**



**Back to school: Natasha McCreech, above right, celebrating her 40th with Carolyn Allen, Joe Pearman and Angus Forbes, below left. All wrapped up: Maeve Bagnall, Hannah Hickingbotham, Hannah Hale, Grace Ireland, Naomi Smith and Hattie Stringer, below**



**Happy days: younger spectators in the school library, below. Stephen Laws, Alex Willis, Tom Sowerby and Laura Terry, bottom left**



**Lucie & Di Foster, Holly & Sarah Newby, Maya Briggs, Jack Newby, Amelia Dodds, John Houseman and Rebecca Dodds**



# Road to Rio



**Bright hope: Jack Laugher**

The weight of expectation grows heavier by the day as former RGS student Jack Laugher prepares for this summer's Olympics in Rio.

The World Series champion has long been a leading light in the Yorkshire diving world. But now he is being touted as one of Team GB's brightest medal hopes for 2016.

Laugher, who left RGS in 2013, is certainly up for the challenge.

He was only 17 years old and studying for his A levels when he took part in his first Olympics in 2012. Back then, he failed to make the semi-finals but gained valuable experience.

Having moved to Leeds, where he trains with the City of Leeds Diving Club, he is now a full-time professional athlete: "Back in 2012, I was just a young lad. I can give it everything I have got this time. The difference is incomparable."

Buoyed by golds in both the 1m springboard and 3m springboard synchro events at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, he took gold in three of last year's International Swimming Federation World Series events. Those victories, in Canada, United Arab Emirates and Russia, also elevated him to overall 3m World Series springboard champion and world number one.

He also took bronze in both the 3m springboard and synchro events at last year's World Championships, becoming only the second British diver to win an individual world diving medal. At the age of only 21, he still has time to shine at both Tokyo 2020 and the 2024 Olympics after that.

For now, just winning a bronze in Rio would be a dream come true: "I don't really care what the colour is. If I come home with any medal, that's what I have dreamed of since I was a kid." We will all be rooting for him.

Ruth Savage

As a young French schoolboy, John Jammes risked his life fighting for his country's freedom in the Resistance movement. But when he arrived in Ripon to teach at RGS after the war, he fell in love with England. He tells **Ruth Savage** why he decided to stay



John Jammes couldn't resist Ripon's charms: with staff, top, Porteus House, below, and, left in the Resistance: 'Taken the day the Germans were kicked out of our area,' he says



Young French assistant John Jammes instantly fell in love with the peaceful, leafy surrounds of Ripon when he arrived here shortly after the end of the Second World War.

The former French Resistance fighter, who risked his life working as a courier for local armed cells from the age of 15, before going on to join an armed unit two years later, recently returned to the school and city he took to his heart as a young man back in 1948.

Mr Jammes, 89, who eventually became a British subject says: "I fell in love with dear old England in Ripon. Following four years under German occupation, I appreciated the wonderful freedom which I discovered from my first day in England, and the incredible kindness of the people I met."

He went on to settle and raise his family in this country and his two sons both rose to the high-ranking position of colonel in the British Army.

John was a schoolboy, living near Tours, South of Normandy, in a beautiful part of the country which, he says, was 'well worth fighting for', when France was invaded.

"My father was an Army officer who had fought at Verdun in WWI, and could not readily accept that his beloved country had been invaded and occupied and humiliated by the hereditary enemy, France having been invaded by the Germans in 1870, 1914 and 1940. I fully shared his view, of

# War and peace

course. It was therefore natural for us to see what we could do to somehow annoy the enemy, being inspired by Britain fighting on, alone, in 1940.

"Father joined a Resistance organisation, and we saw very little of him for a long time, but he survived, I am glad to say. My mother and sister were hounded down by the Gestapo, but were lucky too.

"I was a boarder. My headmaster knew my father and trusted me. From the age of 15, I became his courier and helped to liaise with Resistance cells in the area."

Jammes joined an armed unit of the Resistance (known as the Maquis) after the Allied landings in Normandy on June 6, 1944, when he was just 17.

"I carried on taking messages from the Resistance HQs to various units, often cycling through German convoys on the move from South West France to the Normandy battlefield. "I had a few narrow escapes, but the fact that I wore short trousers and tried to look like a gormless peasant boy - and I did not have to try too hard to achieve this result - was helpful.

"My Maquis was made up of trained soldiers and we ambushed German convoys repeatedly, in the hope that by the time they reached the front line in Normandy, their morale might be somewhat degraded. We did what we could, and our casualty rate was high, with some of my friends being captured and tortured, others being shot by firing squad."

Mr Jammes, who worked as a tutor in Porteus

House from 1948 to 1949, returned to visit RGS last autumn: "I was made very welcome," he says. "It was wonderful to see that the school is doing so well.

"At RGS in 1948 I had found a headmaster, the excellent Mr WJ Strachan, and colleagues, who could not have been more welcoming and who clearly understood why I was so happy in a school with such a great history and traditions."

He made many good friends, including Latin teacher Derick Shaw who was best man at his wedding to Barclays Bank worker Margaret, who was from Hertfordshire, in 1950.

"I remember the names of a few of the other masters: Mr Kempster (French), John Sherwood (PE), F J Budden (music), Mr Thomas, Mr Rogers, P Burton and Mr Brown. "I remember the housekeeper was called Mrs Topping. As we still had rationing, we young hungry masters used to tease her by saying, 'Hard cheese, Mrs Topping' at meal times.

"Although my time at RGS was 67 years ago, I wonder whether any of the boys I taught might still be alive," he says. Mr Jammes, who has four grandchildren, went on to teach at a prep school and eventually ended up working as a French lecturer at Cranfield University: "I spent the rest of my teaching career in this country," he says. Now settled in Olney, Buckinghamshire, he says: "My love for Britain started in Ripon in the 1940s, and I am immensely proud to have become a British subject."

\*Any old friends can contact John on: [jrjammes@gmail.com](mailto:jrjammes@gmail.com)

John Jammes wrote this article about his time in the French Resistance (or Maquis) for our school magazine in 1949. The original was published in French



The call made on the BBC from London on 18 June 1940 by General de Gaulle to the French people to fight on against the German invader was heard and understood by many of them. The Maquis was the expression of this resistance, this will to keep on fighting until the final victory alongside the Allies. The French Forces of the Interior (FFI), the official name of the Maquis, was made up of people from all classes of society, from all professions and from the political parties. It was organised from 1940 throughout the country. The FFI was made up of military units organised in battalions, companies and platoons. The goal of the Maquis was defined as the effective continuation of the armed struggle against the Germans until the liberation of the country. It was in fact a war of liberation and it explains the great interest in it shown in the whole world and by every person in love with freedom.

It goes without saying that the organisation of the FFI faced enormous difficulty in the beginning because of the presence of enemy troops and their collaborators in the whole of the occupied area. When a group of Resistance came together, its members had to be trained, armed and put in touch with the regional military leaders and with the Free French HQ in London. The arming of the Maquis was a very complex problem because it is obvious that weapons had to be parachuted by allied planes (usually by the RAF) without the Germans' knowledge. The parachuting operations occurred at night on a selected dropping zone and contact with the aircrews was made through lighting signals from the ground. The parachuted weapons were mostly light guns such as Sten-guns, Bren-guns, grenades, mines although these were, too often, ineffective against enemy armour.

The members of the Maquis had limited resources but they were driven by a splendid spirit of patriotism and unity. The Maquis commandos led a merciless fight against the vital communication network of the German war machine. The sabotage of the railway and highway networks disrupted the plans of the Wehrmacht command many times and delayed the transport of troop reinforcements especially to the Normandy area after D-Day. The life of the Maquisards was both dangerous and very exciting. The men of the FFI had to live hidden in woods and forests, hunted down and attacked by the enemy. There was no comfort for them,

most of the time there were no warm clothes, inadequate food and sub-standard weapons. Fortunately the Maquis benefited from the help of the local population, who often did not hesitate to risk their own lives on a daily basis to supply and support the FFI by all possible means. Nonetheless, life for members of the Maquis was very tough and I still remember long and cold nights spent on guard at the edge of the forest in a constant state of alert.

The night-time activities of the Maquis consisted mostly of sabotage operations, attacks on convoys as well as ambushes. These attacks resulted in heavy losses being sustained by the enemy as well as the harassment of their troops and the weakening of their morale. German officers captured by my Maquis expressed their fear of our activities and the threat those activities posed to the movement of their troops by day and night.

Members of the Maquis experienced incredible and heroic exploits in this long fight for the freedom of France. These memories are still fresh in our minds. As a result of the fighting by the French Maquis thousands of prisoners were taken as well as the seizure valuable military equipment. On the other hand the FFI mourned many of their best soldiers killed in action, arrested, savagely tortured or deported to concentration camps such as Belsen and Buchenwald.

The contribution of the Maquis to victory has been recognised and highly praised by the Allied military leaders. In his general report on the European operations, General Eisenhower asserted that without the joint action of the French Resistance and the Maquis, the end of the war would have been delayed by several months and Allied losses would have been even higher.

From this glorious page of our national history one can draw an important lesson of trust and hope in the destiny of France. One must also remember that for the duration of this gigantic fight, the effectiveness of Franco-British co-operation was once more demonstrated. United in peace as they were in war our two peoples still have much to achieve together in the future.

May they succeed for the greater good of our western civilisation.

J R Jammes  
Croix de Guerre, 1944



*'Our casualty rate was high. Some of my friends were captured and tortured, others shot by firing squad'*

Then and now: John Jammes as a young man and pictured today, wearing his RGS 1555 tie

## Ruth Savage talks to a brother and sister making a big name for themselves on the international martial arts stage

A brother and sister who attended Ripon Grammar School have won a glittering array of international championship titles and gold and silver world medals in martial arts competitions.

Both Connaire and Roehyne Delaney McNulty, whose mother teaches martial arts, started training in Tang Soo Do when they started primary school. Once at RGS, having joined Chris Jones Martial Arts in Knaresborough, they were encouraged to compete in regional and national tournaments.

“The most prestigious was the World Traditional Karate Kickboxing Association European tournament. We were achieving high places and winning medals in all of the forms categories we were entering,” explains Roehyne, who left RGS in 2010.

Last summer, while taking part in the Martial Arts Show live forms competition, Zara Phytian and Vic Marke, of the World Martial Kombat Federation England Squad, invited them to a highly competitive squad selection day and, having successfully made the team, Connaire and Roehyne travelled to Malta to represent England in the WMKF World Championships in November 2015.

The tournament was held over three days with more than 25 countries taking part and large teams from Mexico and India dominating divisions. As well as winning gold and silver medals, the North Yorkshire siblings were placed second in the self-defence division.

Connaire, who used to play rugby and hockey for RGS and left for Harrogate College to study for a BTEC in sport in 2013, now has two world, two European and two English titles: “I like martial arts



Representing England, above; with the England team in Malta, below, and right, pictured at a squad training day



# Enter the siblings

*“We have met amazing people. Representing England was a great honour”*

because it’s so different,” he says. Roehyne, who used to play football and hockey at school and obtained a first class degree in fine art at Leeds Metropolitan University, now has two world silvers, two European silvers, two English titles and was placed second overall in the Unity Women’s Grand Championships.

“Last year was a good year for us. We have had the privilege of meeting some remarkable athletes and amazing people. Representing England was a great honour, and we hope to be part of things as exciting in the future,” says Roehyne.

“Martial arts is a strange sport, it’s as much about self development and

self discipline as it is about winning things. It’s not a team sport, so the type of confidence you get from it is completely different. We enjoy the challenges it gives us, both physically and mentally. We also really enjoy training together. We know how to progress and how to help each other progress. Looking forward, we hope to be competing in more divisions and taking our martial arts to the next level. The traditional qualities of martial arts are really important to us, and we hope to maintain this aspect in our training and competing,” she adds.

“The future looks very vague at the moment but we are aiming to grab new and exciting opportunities when and where we can, and make the most of everything. We have new training possibilities opening up and hope to be involved with next year’s WMKF World championships. Connaire should really go and defend those world titles.”

The pair have also been busy fundraising, both for charity and to pay towards travelling to martial arts competitions: “The funding available is limited for our sport, so we did various things to raise money, including an 11 mile walk to work and sponsored student tuition, shaving all of our hair off and taking part in the Tough Mudder obstacle race challenge.”

The siblings, who both work at Butterfingers children’s soft play and activity centre in Harrogate, teaching circus workshops and selling props and toys as well as working at festivals and conventions throughout the summer, are about to further their studies. Roehyne has been offered a place on a performance design course while Connaire is due to study sports performance. Both also plan to take a BTEC in circus arts at some point and hope to coach martial arts in the future.

## 3G or not 3G

RGS could soon have a new artificial football and rugby pitch, but it all hinges on planning permission for a new housing development in Ripon. **Ruth Savage** reports

Students at Ripon Grammar School could soon be playing rugby and football on a new fully floodlit 3G ‘third generation’ pitch funded by a property developer if a new housing development in Ripon gets the go ahead.

A 3G pitch is created using artificial turf, made up of synthetic fibres and rubbers which are made to look like grass.

Its durable, all weather surface, with porous layers which let water drain through easily, can be played on for 80 hours a week, as opposed to the five hours a week natural grass pitches can withstand.

Playing characteristics, in terms of ball bounce and ball roll, are good and, although it costs more to install than a natural grass pitch, cleaning and maintenance is easier.

The RGS pitch is dependent on Persimmon Homes securing permission for a housing development on the former Cathedral School site on Whitcliffe Lane. If it does go ahead,

they have agreed to fund a sporting facility in the city, as part of the planning requirements.

As a result, planning permission has been submitted and negotiations for the floodlit 3G pitch on RGS playing fields, which will also be for community use, are now at an advanced stage.



## Students are looking to the future



EWAN Lister of the RAF and Ioannis Matheos of the School of Aviation and Process Engineering at Leeds University were among those past pupils who returned to RGS to talk to students at our careers and higher education evening in March. More than 50 organisations, including Nestle, Boots, Barclays and the Met Office, took part in the event, which concentrated on science, technology, engineering, maths and sport. The next careers event, focussing on law, humanities, arts, languages and business, will be held in March 2017. If you or your employer would like to take part, or if you can help our students in any other way, please contact head of careers Jill Locke on [LockeJ@ripogrammar.co.uk](mailto:LockeJ@ripogrammar.co.uk).



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