

IN BRIEF

- Congratulations to Tim Robinson (Lower Sixth) who, in September, was selected to represent the Yorkshire and Humberside Triathlon team and went to the national championships in Glasgow. The championship was on the 1st of September, and he came 29th out of 33 participants (but first from the Yorks' and Humb' team!) He has been doing triathlons for 5 years, and is now in the Under 23 category and hopes to gradually build up to doing some competitive events in a few years time, but hopefully will be doing the Ripon Triathlon next year!
- In the science block S2 (Biology department) and S7 (Physics department) have just been refurbished and now offer state of the art facilities. As we go to press, the Biology department prep room is also under extensive redevelopment and expansion. Article and photos in the next edition!
- On Wednesday 12th September, the RGS Greenpower Electric Car Club attended a race at Croft Racing Circuit with their two electrically powered cars. The cars ran very well and were holding first and third places for the first three hours. Unfortunately, in the last hour of the race the cars' batteries got very low on voltage and they had to settle for second and seventh places, the Carbon Comet taking silver. However, we have just heard that both cars have qualified for the national final at Goodwood Motor Circuit on the 14th October for the fourth year in succession. Well done to the following pupils: *Dominick Quinn – 2C, Fergus Scholes – 2D, Ben Widdowson – 2D, Sam Waddington – 2D, Fraser Birtwistle – 3B, Marcus Fenlon – 3B, David Fink – 3B, Ryan Galloway – 3B, Angus Gillespie – 3B, Harry Green – 3B, Lewis Haggerty – 3B, Christopher Ogden – 3C, Jonathan Owens – 3C, Mark Robinson – 3D, Rachael Sharp – 4A, Morgan Brice – 4A*
- Jack Laugher (2B) has recently won the English Schools Swimming Associations (ESSA) national springboard diving competition in Plymouth. Jack was chosen to represent the Yorkshire diving team and Ripon Grammar because of his many successes over the last year, not least being ranked number 1 (under 13s) in the country. Jack who dives for Harrogate and District Diving Club started diving at the age of seven and was quickly spotted by British Diving. He was selected to join the World Class Start junior squad and he has recently attended, over the autumn half term, a diving camp in Texas, USA with the 2012 Olympics squad. He is now working towards entry into British Diving development squad where athletes are being trained for the 2012 London Olympics. Jack's trip down to Plymouth was very successful. Diving in the Junior Boys section he secured a gold medal, helping the Yorkshire team to come equal first with Hampshire.
- Congratulations to under 13 cricketer George Lamb who has been invited to join the England Spin Bowling Academy, a great Honour! George will receive his advanced tuition at Headingley.
- Well done to Peter Marsden's Under 13 Rugby team and to James Woolfenden's Under 12 rugby team. Both of these teams will be invited to the semi final play-offs for the Rugby Football Union's North and Central Yorkshire Leagues. The play-offs will take place in early March.



• Many thanks to our sponsor of the Under 16s rugby team for their new kit.

• Heartfelt thanks to Mr. Douglas Rae of the Golden Casket confectionery concern in Greenock. Mr. Rae has kindly commissioned a local Scots firm to manufacture a set of rugby jerseys for his grandson Daniel's Under 15 rugby team. Mr. Rae is also chairman of Greenock Morton F.C. and his soccer team is comfortably placed in the Scottish second division.

- Earlier in the academic year, sixty six pupils in the lower sixth received their Key Skills in ICT Level 2 certificate taken last year; and everyone who was entered passed! This qualification will give each pupil 10 extra UCAS points. Several of the pupils will be taking their Level 3 certificate as part of their General Studies A Level course and as a consequence, should they pass they will receive a further 20 points towards UCAS. Mr Walker adds, "I am delighted with the results of these pupils and the progress they have made in such a short time. This is a new course at Ripon Grammar School and it is pleasing they managed to achieve their qualifications in one year rather than two".

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

07-Jan-08	Staff Training
08-Jan-08	School Opens
15-Jan-08 ^{1st}	Form Parents Evening 4.30 - 7.00 pm
16-Jan-08 ^{5th}	Form Mocks Start
23-Jan-08	L6th Parents Evening 4.30 - 7.00 pm
25-Jan-08	5th Year Mocks End
28-Jan-08	Open Evening 6th Form Intake 2008
30-Jan-08	House Cross Country
04-Feb-08	U6th Assessments Start
05-Feb-08	3rd Form Information Evening 7.30 pm
08-Feb-08	U6th Assessments End

Please note that the Careers Evening is to be held on 21st February 2008 from 7pm to 8.30pm. Pupils will have the opportunity to speak to employers from a wide range of business sectors about the work that they do, the skills and qualifications required and career paths within their sphere of employment. Participants will include global companies such as Deloitte and Rolls Royce plc as well as representatives from the medical professions, the forces, North Yorkshire County Council and a range of small and medium sized local businesses. A number of universities will also be represented.

Mrs F Wilson

FROM THE EDITOR...

Many thanks to the pupils, parents, Old Riponians, staff and anyone else who has made an amazing contribution to this edition! There is a lot happening at Ripon Grammar School and we always want to know about it! Please email me at stevensf@ripongrammar.co.uk with any ideas for articles.

I would be especially interested to hear from any Old Riponians who can give our readers an idea of what life is like post-RGS! An extra special thanks goes to Emily Steed, the assistant editor, who really has worked tirelessly on this edition! I couldn't have done it without her! As Emily will be moving on to pastures new at university at the end of this year, I am looking for someone in the current Lower Sixth to take her place - should you be interested, please email me a short piece explaining why you would like to work for the RGS! News.

For further information please contact us:

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RGS news

WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER

Dear Parents,

This edition of the RGS News reflects what a busy term this has been. Charity Week and House Drama were real highlights, with almost £8,000 being raised so far for Cystic Fibrosis and 'Our Day Out' winning House Drama.

The most exciting piece of news is that the bid for funding for the joint sixth form block with Ripon College has been successful. This will be a £1.8 million project which will be on the Grammar School site, and will enhance facilities for students at the Grammar School as well as the College. There will be much needed private study space as well as an engineering room, a performing - arts space, science laboratories and seminar rooms. It will be sited on the orchard site next to the mathematics and engineering block.

The proposed completion date is around Summer 2009, and it will address a number of deficiencies in provision for the students of both schools at sixth-form level. Demand for places at the Grammar School is very high, and there will be collaboration between ourselves and Boroughbridge and Nidderdale schools by assessing the viability of video conferencing lessons between schools to improve provision for those with small sixth forms.

This project will begin to give the schools in Ripon a facility which will be the envy of many local schools, and the students here will benefit immensely.

The fundraising is now well under way for the sports hall, and Compton's International are overseeing the process. Amy Smith is the campaign manager and she is based at school. A series of

information events will be held next term, and if parents wish to go to one of these then they should contact Amy at school. The campaign has got off to a tremendous start and my thanks go to the many people who have already contributed. The target is £750,000 by October 2008, and as soon as the money is raised then building can commence.

This much needed facility will enhance the educational provision here at Ripon Grammar School, and permit students to keep fit as they develop a healthy lifestyle. There is a report below from Compton's. My sincere thanks to the governors for their support for this project and to the members of the campaign board who give up significant amounts of time to help. Particular thanks go to Mr. Richard Edwards, the Campaign Chairman, for leading this project.

It was good to see so many former students return for Speech Day, and I am grateful to our guest speaker, Mr. Stewart Regan, Chief Executive of Yorkshire County Cricket Club, for delivering such an inspiring address.

Our new staff have settled very well, and you will find more detail about them in this edition. The term has gone very well so far, and I am delighted with the way the students have settled to the academic challenges that they have faced. My thanks go to the governors, staff and parents for the way they have supported the school and it was gratifying to be recognised by the local authority as a 'highly effective school', the highest grade that can be awarded, during a recent inspection. All that now remains in the immediate future is to ensure that the necessary funding for the sports hall is secured to make Ripon Grammar School a truly outstanding school!

My best wishes to you and all your families for a peaceful and happy Christmas and a successful New Year.

M L Pearman (Headmaster)

FUNDRAISING FOR THE NEW SPORTS HALL IS UNDERWAY!

Compton

Compton Fundraising Consultants are capital fundraising specialists and have over 50 years of experience worldwide. I work as a Campaign Manager for Compton and my current project is at Ripon Grammar School. As Campaign Manager I provide all executive support, advice and training to the Campaign Board and maintain the momentum of the Campaign.

I am delighted to be assigned this campaign - being a keen sports-person myself I really value the need for facilities for young people; it is so important to both their physical and psychological well-being. The aim of my presence in the school is to help the board achieve the fundraising target of £750,000 in order to build

a new sports hall. So how do we go about it? We have already formed a Campaign Board who will meet regularly. The Board will be fully trained in order that they can obtain the monies required from several sources.

This is done largely through holding a series of information events. I am also working with several students to put together a promotional DVD and brochure which can be used at presentations. Along with Mr Pearman I shall be holding several student workshops in the coming months, in order to involve the pupils further.

Please contact me through the school phone number or via email at ASmith@ComptonFundraising.co.uk with any questions.

Ms Amy Smith

WELCOME!

MRS P STOREY

The Head has a new secretary this year. Mrs Storey has joined us from Brackenfield Preparatory School in Harrogate. Before starting work in schools, she had a number of exciting jobs. These included working in the Diplomatic Service of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in the Middle East, Africa and Europe as well as working for the Editor of the Harrogate Advertiser! In her free time she enjoys renovating her house and being with her family.

MRS M MATTHEW



Mrs Matthew, below, has joined our Classics department this year after twelve years at Teesside High School for girls. She will be particularly involved with the upper school, teaching the fourth, fifth and sixth formers as well as acting as a form tutor for L6C. She loves to travel and get involved with charity work. Mrs Matthew also has a passion for horse riding, especially for dressage in which she competes at affiliated level.

MISS S NEWCOMBE



Joining us from Billingham Campus, Mrs Newcombe is a new member of the Design and Technology department. She will be involved in teaching all years from the first year to the sixth form and will also be involved in visiting the Y5 classes of local primary schools for two periods a week. She has previously worked at Huntcliff School in Saltburn and will also be acting as a lower sixth form tutor.

MR I WALKER



Mr Walker is the latest addition to the physics department and replaces Mr Newlands. Before becoming a teacher, Mr Walker had a background in engineering, working as a Captain in the British Army. He has recently moved to Ripon, joining us from Beckfoot School in Bingley and will also act as a lower sixth form tutor. He has just returned from his honeymoon, which was spent travelling in South America. Describing himself as a keen walker and mountaineer he hopes to get involved with the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme and the other sporting and outdoor activities that the school has to offer.

MISS C GENNEVIEVE



Miss Genneviève joins us from France, after moving to England in 2001 and replaces Mademoiselle Passerat as a key member of our French department.

She will be teaching all school years, and is form tutor for 2B. She has been teaching since 2003 and her previous school was Barlby High School.

MISS L RAYMER



Miss Raymer joins us after doing her training at a small village school. She has a degree in Sport and Exercise Science from Manchester Metropolitan

University and she will be an asset to our Physical Education Department. She is already involved in Improvers' Swimming and Gym Club and runs the school netball teams. She has recently moved to Ripon and will be involved in teaching all year groups. In her free time she enjoys going to music festivals and also plays lacrosse for Leeds!

MR K AUGER



Mr Auger joins Ripon Grammar School as Assistant Head teacher. He will be also teaching mathematics. He comes to us after seven years at Wetherby High

School where he was also an Assistant Head. He is already getting involved in the U13 rugby and is an enthusiastic sportsman. In his spare time, he likes to follow rugby and is a passionate Wales supporter! Mr Auger's office is on the admin corridor.

MRS F WILSON



Mrs Wilson will be in school four days a week and holds the role of Personal Development Curriculum Co-ordinator. She has a

background in human resources and career development and will be working closely with the fifth and sixth formers to offer careers guidance. She wishes to help students to make the best out of their talents and the opportunities given to them. Outside of work, she has a love for music and walking in the countryside.

MR J DITTRICH

Jochen replaces Knut Frietag as our German language assistant. He is studying English and Geography at Wirzburg University in Bavaria. He has chosen to come and work in England in order to improve his English and to become acquainted with the country, as he has never visited here before! He will be working chiefly with the sixth form students in order to prepare them thoroughly for their A level examinations.

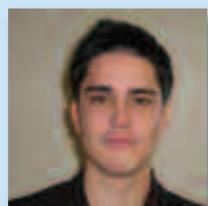
MR R GRIGGS



Our new head of physics is Mr Griggs, who will be teaching all year groups. He has eighteen years experience teaching physics and joins us from Boswells School in

Chelmsford. However, he has also worked for Western Geophysical in oil exploration! He will also be involved in the engineering side of the school. He loves hill walking, marking homework and morris dancing - certainly something a bit different!

MR L MOVELLAN



As our new French assistant, Loic will be working with the sixth formers. He comes from Poitiers, which is near to La Rochelle and is taking a gap year from his University course.

He studies Business and Marketing and has come to England to improve his English. He likes drawing, participating in sport and listening to music!

MR A STONE

Mr Stone joins us after studying an IT practitioners first diploma at college. He will be working within the IT department as the assistant IT Technician. Mr Stone always enjoys playing football and is a football coach! He also acts as a youth worker and scout helper in his free time.

MR D HANSON

We welcome Mr Hanson in the new position of Premises Manager on site, dealing with the day to day running of the buildings, overseeing new builds and much more! Mr Hanson's office is in Room 16. Mr Hanson used to be head of D&T in a large comprehensive school in London.

THE NEW MATHEMATICS AND ENGINEERING BUILDING



Throughout last year, we watched and waited
Saw the block rise by degrees
We were excited, yet frustrated
When would we be given keys?

The summer term saw frantic packing
Two hundred boxes, maybe more.
We used pupils for their stacking
Tessellations created on the floor.

When at last we were allowed
To open wide that heavy door,
By huge dimensions we were wowed
As well as by the blue décor!

Five new classrooms warm and airy
With bright white lights that never dim.
And Mr Pearman should be wary
For now we have a view of him!

We love this space. Our teaching's better.
Some of us even use IT.
We oft' recall when the weather's wetter
The "water features" of old Hut 3.

At last we're warm and dry and cosy
All together beneath one roof.
The maths department's future's rosy
Our smiling faces are the proof!

(With apologies to the English Department!)

"The Mathematics department wish to thank the school for allowing them to teach in the new block. We love it!"

The Maths teachers of RGS

"It's colour scheme is nice and fresh and helps me to concentrate."

Alexandra Dinning 1A

"We like it because it is modern, clean and well cared for. This gives us a fantastic environment to learn in."

Amy Richardson and Kelly Simpson 3D

"The facilities for the disabled are fantastic!"

Sam Easton 2B

"It is spacious and the extra engineering facilities are a real improvement to the school."

Oliver Schofield L6C

LIBRARY NEWS

The Library has been fully booked recently!

READATHON

In OCTOBER all of the First Years took part in the annual READATHON during which they managed to read over 150 books and raise an amazing £1080.61, all of which goes to the CLIC Sergeant and The Roald Dahl Foundations that help children in Britain suffering from cancer, Hodgkin's disease, leukaemia, epilepsy, blood disorders and brain injuries. This is the second largest amount raised by an RGS First Year group in the past 17 years! WELL DONE First Years!

CHARITY WEEK 2007

The week before half term at Ripon Grammar School is charity week; students and staff both participate in a range of activities to raise as much money as possible for a worthy cause. The chosen charity of 2007 was the Cystic Fibrosis Trust. CF is the UK's most common life threatening disease. It causes the lungs and digestive system to be clogged with thick sticky mucus making breathing and digestion very difficult. The average life expectancy of a CF child is 31 years, and 5 babies with CF are born each week.

The sixth form this year was remarkably well organised in planning activities at break, lunch and even after school for this fantastic cause. Thanks must go to the first years for baking such delicious treats which were sold at break time whilst we enjoyed our very own 'X Factor' competition starring a variety of students and teachers of varying talent! Monday's 'Mock the Week' was hilarious; whilst on Tuesday, Mr Williams' staff and student band made us see that teachers really can be cool.

Wednesday's fashion show was a stunning showcase of varying attires, from hillbillies to ravers to the classic chav. We were also treated to the Graham Curriegan's unforgettable, ineffable and quite possibly inimitable "Life and Death of a Pteradactyl".

Wednesday evening was the sixth form charity ball, a fun, formal occasion which gave the sixth formers a chance to wear their best attire and let their hair down. Many thanks go to the local businesses who donated prizes for the raffle, which raised a substantial sum of money: Hemingways, Ripon Race Course, Ripon City Music, City Electrical Factors, Romanby Golf Club, W. E. Dixon, Lightwater Valley and Bliss.

Tensions ran high in 'Deal or No Deal', where contestants Christie and Ryan played for grammes of chocolate as opposed to bundles of cash! Teachers had their cars polished to perfection by enthusiastic sixth formers keen to get wet and soapy, and a couple of water fights did ensue! Home Bargains, Bensons of Ripon and Motor World very kindly donated buckets, sponges and car wash respectively.

Friday's Staff Panto of Cinderella provided male staff with the excuse to get their legs out and wear make up. New additions to traditions included top button tickets, where for one day only rebels could roam with loose collars for the small sum of 50p, as well as 'Whose Knees are These?' There were also raffles for chocolate and Jack Wills vouchers, and Dr Grime and Mrs Robertson very sportingly were gunged on the school field! Successful junior and senior film nights were also organised, the first year ever that charity week has included after school entertainment. Mention must also go to our intrepid runners who attempted the Great North Run earlier in the academic year! All in all, it was a wonderful week culminating in a lot of fun and funds. **The total amount raised is a new record and stands at £7771.97!**

Emily Reed & George Owram



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS AWARD

As you may be aware, this year RGS was one of the 447 schools that received the International Schools Award....

The ISA supports schools to develop their 'collaborative curriculum based international work' and gives the school the opportunity to raise its profile locally, nationally and abroad, the aim is to involve as many students, and staff, as possible. This award reflects our involvement in the Comenius project with our partner schools in Germany, Norway and Poland.

So far, there have been meetings in Lubliniec, Poland, here in Ripon and also in Mandal, Norway. Since the last meeting, project ideas have been finalised and themes discussed for work to take to the next meeting, which was held in Germany in December. Previous project work has included planet mosaics, cubist artwork, poetry, songs and video making, project website creation, work on seasons and astronomy, looking at Bonfire Night and the making of a multilingual calendar, all based on our shared project title "The Sun—how does it influence our lives?".



Collaboration has mostly been in English, however many projects have been adapted to benefit all four schools involved. Much of our work at the December meeting focused on preparation for Christmas. Ideas include the sharing of traditional customs, poetry, ornaments and decorations and of course recipes for mince pies and Christmas pudding! After the visit to Germany, there is one final visit to Poland to mark the end of the project. However, there is the opportunity to restart the programme with a different theme.

Having been involved with the Comenius project for two years, I have been able to see the beneficial aspects of forming such links; teachers have been able to discuss training strategies; work-experience placements have been secured with the aid of the partner schools and every one of the students involved has had a great time meeting people of similar ages from the other countries. **For any further information on the Comenius Project or the International Schools Award, please contact Mrs Henson at the school.**

Hannah Lincoln, (L6)

GCSE SUCCESS at RIPON GRAMMAR



Five pupils achieved particular exam success in their French GCSEs this year. To get in the top five marks in the country is a very special achievement and Robert Murray, Bronwyn Wernyj, Stuart Wallace, Benedict Clancy and Hannah Lincoln all reached this high level when they sat their

French GCSE in June. Robert, Bronwyn and Hannah are continuing French at A-level and are aiming to improve their standard even further by taking part in the school's French exchange in October. Lillian Duffield achieved similar success in her Classical Civilisation GCSE.

Mr S Smith

KIDS LIT QUIZ

NOVEMBER saw the school's preliminary heat of the International Kids Lit Quiz in which twelve teams of first and second years battled it out to win the chance to represent the school at the Yorkshire Finals held in Huddersfield on November 9th. In the first round two teams ended up as the top contestants: 'Ginger Dogs with Attitude' (Jimmie Drummond, Angus Johnston, Jack Laugher, and Jack Lale) and 'The Skull Splitters' (Natasha Gregg, Daniel Hasson, Billy Holdsworth, and Emily Harris).

In the second round the final team of Billy Holdsworth, Angus Johnston, Jack Laugher and Daniel Hasson were selected with Natasha Gregg acting as reserve. At the Yorkshire finals the team of Billy, Angus, Daniel and Natasha did extremely well, winning one of the rounds and coming joint fifth in the overall scoring. An excellent effort on the part of our young readers!

CHRISTMAS BOOK FAIR

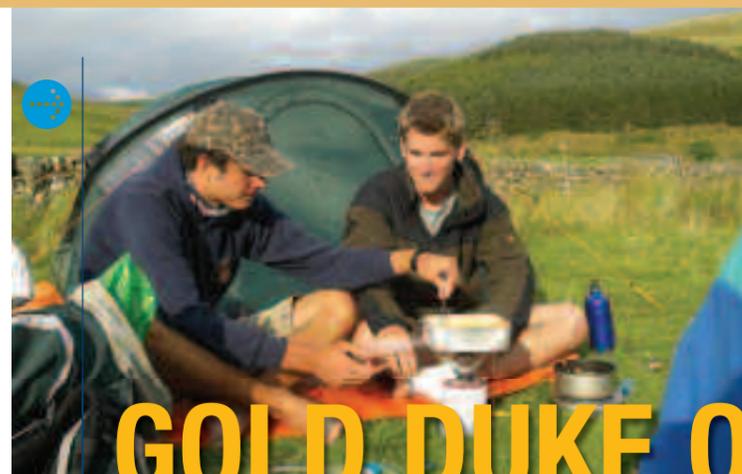
To finish off the term the Library held the Annual Christmas Book Fair with books provided by The White Rose Bookshop of Thirsk. All proceeds go to help the library to buy more new books but more importantly the Book Fair is an excellent opportunity for the Staff and pupils to share time together talking about reading. Last year we raised over £200 for library books so we are hoping we can match that figure at least this year.

Mrs A Tarter

FRENCH EXCHANGE 2007-8

25 Fourth Years and Lower Sixth students have just returned from their exchange with the Institution Saint Louis in Pont l'Abbé d'Arnoult, near Saintes in the Charente-Maritime. This was our twentieth exchange and students returned having made good progress with their French and having enjoyed good relations with their partners.

As a group we visited the Hennessy cognac distillery, visited the Chateau d'Usson, known as the Chateau des Enigmes, and made chocolates at the Letuffe chocolate makers. Pupils also attended a number of lessons. We look forward to the return of the group at Easter.



GOLD DUKE OF EDINBURGH

For most RGS students, the summer holidays were spent sunbathing on beaches or chilling out in front of the TV. However, for Helen Wilson, Jonathan Dale, David Bradley, Rob Barker and me, it was a completely different story.

Just two weeks after completing a practice expedition in the Lake District we found ourselves on a minibus for the second time in the summer holidays, on our way to Peebles in Scotland. We spent the long journey comparing tans (unsurprisingly, after two weeks in Greece, David won hands down) and catching up, before all too soon being forced to wave goodbye to our luxuries and commence our 50 mile expedition over the next 4 days.

Throughout the expedition, Rob acted somewhat as a mentor to us all, with a Mary Poppins style first aid kit and words of reassuring wisdom whenever they were needed. The third day was definitely the toughest and there were many intervals when Rob and Jon argued over the interpretations of the map, battling it out over the position of alpha male. Helen, David and I took these opportunities to sit down, get out our Mars bars and pester Rob with the question "Are we nearly there yet?"

The walking was tough and the hygiene horrendous (for the girls anyway) but the tremendous views (particularly at the top of our 800m climb), interesting people we met along the way and the opportunity to go swimming in Loch Skeen seemed to make up for it. As we finally reached the last 3k, the sense of achievement started to kick in and David played the Final Countdown on his iPod while we sang and danced. It was only after about 10 minutes that we realised we still had a way to walk!

When we eventually did reach our destination, the girls headed straight for the toilets and the boys to the fish and chip shop! The expedition was definitely unforgettable and the group would like to thank Mrs Sparey for all of her hard work in organising the expeditions and supporting the group.

Emily Steed, (U6)

MORTAL INVENTIONS!

In November a very lucky group of students from Ripon Grammar School had the opportunity to spend an afternoon working with the acclaimed author and illustrator Philip Reeve. During the session the author worked with small groups of lower school students on activities based on his 'Mortal Engines' series of books. In the series the world is populated by cities that have escaped the polluted landscape by becoming huge traction engines.

The students discussed the craft of writing and themes from 'Mortal Engines' with Mr. Reeve as they wrote their own additional chapters to the Mortal Engines series, constructed model cities from selected bits of rubbish, and designed publicity posters. A balloon debate had students speaking as characters from the books to plead their case for remaining airborne.

That evening Mr. Reeve met with the school's 'Reading Champions', a group of lads, dads and granddads, at The White Rose Bookshop in Thirsk where he talked about his writing, answered questions, and read from his latest book 'Here Lies Arthur', which has been short listed for the 2007 Booktrust Teenage Book Prize. According to Mr. Reeve, the visit was the most successful school visit he has ever made as all of the children involved were creative and imaginative, and so enthusiastic about the books and the characters.



JUNIOR SPORTS LEADERS' AWARD



In February this year many of the Grammar school students and students from Ripon College embarked on their Junior Sports Leaders award. We were at the time 4th and 5th year students and have all thoroughly enjoyed the experience. We began the

programme by introducing ourselves to various sports, learned how to warm up and cool down effectively and safely, how to plan and carry out simple sporting activities and how to communicate in different ways. We did various activities with children of different ages .

These activities included football tournaments, tag rugby, tennis festivals and best of all, the Mini Olympics! This was so much fun! We had hundreds of kids from many primary schools around the area, and each Junior Leader ran their own activity. The kids were laughing, smiling and having fun, but at the same time were exercising. Bachelors sponsored us, which meant that the kids could receive medals making the day extra special to them.

Some of us also helped out in local sports days, which was also very enjoyable. During the programme we got the opportunity to go on a range of courses including tag-rugby courses, a multi-skills academy, disability sports course, etc.

From this programme we have all gained a recognised qualification, valuable experience, but I think perhaps most importantly we have made new friends, have matured, gained confidence, and developed valuable skills that we will use in our everyday lives.

I personally want to become an educational psychologist. This whole experience has helped me considerably as I have learned how to include various children with different problems in sport, but also the more basic skill of how to communicate clearly and effectively with children of different ages in different circumstances. I would like to thank Mrs. Mackenzie for all her hard work and allowing this experience to be possible.

The following people took part in the course: Lillian Duffield, Maddie Wivell, Naomi Wass, Hannah Lincoln, Emily Harkleroad, Nicole Hutton, Frankie Fowden and Clare Smithson.

Clare Smithson, (L6)

ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

I first started playing tennis at the age of seven at Ripon Tennis Centre and over the next six years I followed my coach as he moved to Sunderland, Cheshire and Middlesbrough. In 2003 I was one of six girls to be awarded a full Scholarship to the Lawn Tennis Association Academy at Leeds Metropolitan University.

My training consisted of combining 20 hours a week of tennis and fitness with yoga, psychology, nutrition and physiotherapy sessions. When the academy closed in August 2006 I made the decision to continue at school instead of playing tennis full-time in London. I am currently splitting my training between Tennis World in Middlesbrough and the performance centre in Leeds.

Over the years, I have represented club, county and country in various competitions, leading several clubs to the National Club League finals and representing Yorkshire in numerous County Cup finals. I have been selected for Great Britain on many occasions for both team and individual events, competing against players from countries such as America, Russia, Netherlands, Sweden and

Poland. In order to gain valuable experience of playing against some of the world's best juniors, I have also had to travel throughout Europe to countries including France, Spain and Germany.

The most memorable experience in my tennis career so far is playing on Centre Court at Wimbledon on the middle Saturday of the 2002 Championships, just before one of Tim Henman's matches. This was a televised demonstration of the 'Players of the Future' and afterwards I was interviewed live on BBC Grandstand by Annabel Croft, a leading British player in the 1990s. Other great achievements include reaching the last four in the National Road to Wimbledon finals in 2004, which was held on the outside courts at Wimbledon, and being runner-up in the National Clay Court Championships in 2003, a tournament in which the country's top sixteen juniors compete each year.

More recently, this summer I have managed to achieve some of my best results yet, through concentrating on international events at both world junior level (ITF tournaments) and world senior level (\$10,000 tournaments). In the ITF Juniors I reached the singles quarterfinals in Winchester, the singles semi-final and doubles final in Dublin and I also qualified for the National Finals in Bournemouth for the sixth consecutive year, and not forgetting that I was one of only two Brits to qualify for the senior international at Ilkley.

This is quite some achievement for me as I have played so little this year due to illness and injury. To say that I achieved these results after recently changing from a two-handed backhand to a one hander, a change rarely attempted, I have had a very good year.

Laura Gilbert, (U6)

ON YOUR BIKE, BEN!

Ben Moorhouse, currently studying in the lower sixth form, has just completed a successful season in his chosen sport of downhill mountain bike racing.

He has been riding bikes for a number of years and this was his first full season, racing in the Scottish Downhill Series, National Points Series, various local races and two Urban Downtown races.

This has taken him far and wide to places such as Fort William, Aberdeen, Cardiff, Swansea and everywhere in between with regular visits to Hamsterley Forest to train and hone his skills.

Downhill racing is a race from the top of the hill to the bottom over rocks, roots, jumps and bumps usually in forests twisting and turning through the trees on a timed run with the fastest time in each category winning. In 2006 Ben was approached by Ripon's Moonglu Cycles and asked to ride for their team.

Some of his best results this year were coming sixth on the renowned World Cup Course down the Nevis Range at Fort William and third in the Penarth Downtown race near Cardiff.

Ben has just finished the 2007 season with a UK ranking of 10th in the Youth Category, and is looking forward to the move up to the Junior Category in January 2008.

Further details on Ben's progress can be found on his website: www.benmoorhouse.co.uk



UNDER 16 GIRLS FOOTBALL TRIUMPH



North Yorkshire Schools U-16 F.A. Cup Semi Final

Monday 26th November 2007, Kick-off 1:30pm
Venue: Mallorie Park

Ripon Grammar School 6 v. 0 St. Aidan's Harrogate (HT 3-0)

Nicki Gears 2, Sammi Brennand 2, Fiona Mingay, Sophie Reeves

BACK (left to right): Mr Green, Emma Bennett, Anna Grundy, Sophie Reeves, Sammi Brennand, Nat Buckleigh, Katie Davill, Katie Mitchell **MIDDLE** (left to right): Natalia Dehutravay, Hannah Waddington, Laura McCarthy, Amelia Tearle, Natasha Mortimer, Harriet Floyd **FRONT:** (left to right): Nicki Gears, Fiona Mingay

After second and third Round victories against Easingwold (5-0 home) and Graham School from Scarborough (4-1 away), Ripon Grammar School U-16 girls faced St. Aidan's from Harrogate in the North Yorkshire Schools FA Cup Semi Final on Monday 26th November at Mallorie Park, Ripon. An excellent display of football saw the side 3-0 up at half-time after Nicki Gears sent them into an early lead, central defender Samantha Brennand almost brought the goals down with a thundering 30 yard volley and Fiona Mingay drove in a beauty from just outside the box. The girls added another three goals in the second half with Nicki and Sammi scoring again and Sophie Reeves getting her second goal of the season. The girls will now play Wensleydale in the Cup Final.

Mr J Clarke

STOP PRESS! RGS beat Wensleydale 1-10 in the final..

LOWER SIXTH ART TRIP TO CORNWALL



On a Thursday lunchtime in September our coach arrived to take us to Cornwall. The journey was uneventful and we arrived tired, but happy. A good night's sleep and a full breakfast meant the group was eager to get out and cope with the rigours of drawing and sketching the magnificent scenery that was Porthcurno Beach....

The sky was cloudless and the sun was warm as we went about our work; the sparkle and the brilliance of the light being an inspiration to everyone. A climb up the cliff steps past the Minack Theatre and a short walk along the coast to the next headland gave us another amazing viewpoint for our landscape work.

Back to St Ives for a late lunch of Cornish pasties and on to Barbara Hepworth's studio where we spent several hours in the house and garden drawing her sculptures. The evening meal at the youth hostel was followed by a walk into Penzance to visit the cinema. The evening was almost a huge success, the only slight hitch being a closed and locked youth hostel when we returned. However, with a little stoicism from the students and an indomitable Mr Duckworth, we were able to, eventually, sleep soundly in our beds.

Saturday's excursions took us first to Lanyon's Quoit, a megalithic structure high on the moors, and then to one of the many ruined tin mines. The moor tops were cloudy, but bright, ideal for sketching these stone structures in all their gravity grandeur. After a packed lunch on the bus, we arrived back in the bright sunshine of St Ives where we visited three galleries: the Tate St Ives, the Penwyn Society and the St Ives Art Society, each one



SIXTH FORM ART TRIP TO PARIS

LES BLEUS NON! NON! NON!

After arriving at Paris Charles De Gaulle airport and transferring to our hotel in Central Paris, we quickly made our way via le Metro to the National Collection d'Art Moderne at the Musee de la Ville de Paris housed at the Tokyo Palace Museum. This collection comprises work of early 20th century French painting, documenting the beginning of Modern Art.

The energy and dynamism of Paris as a burgeoning city coupled to dramatic technological developments. Such energy, fragmentation and rhythm is expressful in the modernist strategies such as DeLaunay's monumental "La Cite".

This outburst of radical visual language excited our students who responded enthusiastically. Eager to explore and soak in as much of Paris as possible, we marched through a labyrinth of boulevards to reach the height of Montmartre and the Sacre Coeur. Views from over the city offered a picturesque walk home for the students who were extremely thankful for their beds.

Over the next three days, visits to the Musée Picasso, the Catacombs, the Grande Arche of La Défense and the Musée D'Orsay provided rich visual stimulus. Mrs Henson and Tori Garbutt were ensconced in the Paris Catacombs, with the company of six million skeletons, at one point Tori dropped her pastels and wasn't sure exactly what she had retrieved from the murky floor! The whole structure of passageways and rooms were constructed of bone!

A definite highpoint was the newly refurbished Drogerie, which displayed Monet's "Waterlilies" on sympathetic curved walls. In the afternoon, we visited Monet's House and Japanese Garden, the site of the actual paintings. This was following a leisurely lunch at the authentic French hotel, Hotel Boudy.

Returning to the airport, the conversation with our driver, François, centered around the forthcoming England/France Rugby World Cup match. François exclaimed excitedly that he would sound his horn when Les Bleus won! Mr Duckworth replied, "Les Bleus. Non! Non! Non!" The journey home was safe and gave students time to reflect on a very exciting trip and work on the annotated sketchbook.

Mrs F Henson



giving a unique perspective on Cornish contemporary art. During our walk we photographed views and scenes around the beach, harbour and pier. For our last night's entertainment we held a "competition" to find which student could design the most evocative memory drawing for the visit.

Sunday morning arrived and we left the Cornish sunshine for our return journey, but again, thankfully, it was uneventful. Of the memories I have of the visit, I appreciated the involvement and commitment the students had to their work, each one coming home laden with drawings and photos, providing so much inspiration to take into their coursework.

Mr G Davis

GEORGE LAMB'S SUMMER OF CRICKET 2007

I started playing cricket in the summer of 2005, when England recaptured the Ashes from Australia, and I joined Studley Royal Cricket club that summer. At the start of the 2006 cricket season, in April, I took part in the Claro Craven cricket trial held at Ripon College and got in and was put forward to a North Yorkshire trial. However, I didn't make it into the North Yorkshire squad. I was on the reserve list, but I had hopes that the next year I could make it into the squad.

I attended various net sessions over the winter hosted by Adrian Grayson and, thanks to Mr. Garvey's recommendation, the Pathways scheme at Thirsk (which corresponds to Yorkshire County Cricket Club). By the start of the 2007 season I was confident about what the season had in store for me and at the start of it I achieved my initial target, getting into North Yorkshire and took two wickets in my first game. In my third match I took three wickets and as a reward was given a Yorkshire trial on the Sunday of that week.

The Yorkshire trial was a very nerve-racking experience and generally my bowling was good. My batting however, wasn't and with many others there I thought my chances were slim but that evening I received a call from Keith Dickson, the Yorkshire manager, who congratulated me on getting into Yorkshire. I was over the moon and in my first match I took a hat trick as Yorkshire convincingly beat Cleveland. As the season progressed I grew more confident with the Yorkshire squad and collected more and more wickets for Yorkshire and North Yorkshire.

One Saturday in July, the Yorkshire assistant coach, Tony Bowes phoned me and asked if I could attend a North of England trial the following day. I couldn't refuse the offer. On the Sunday, I travelled to Leeds and tried to gain a place with the North of

England. This was an experience to savour knowing that I was playing with boys that one day will play for England. After the trial all I had to do was wait and it wasn't until my next Yorkshire game that I found out. I had got in to the North of England and was going to go on tour to Taunton in Somerset for a week.

That week was sensational, and a challenge. In my first match I took a five wicket haul against the Midlands, my first in representative cricket. It was the highlight of my cricket career to date. The week overall was a success. The North of England finished 3rd and it was a pleasure to be part of a great team. The end of the season finished on a bit of a low with Studley Royal losing in the final of the Nidderdale league against Knaresborough.

Most recently I have been invited to attend the England spin academy which is held on various occasions over the winter. I have more hopes about next year and cannot wait for the new season.



George Lamb, (3C)

TWO GRAMMAR SCHOOL PUPILS WIN NATIONAL PLAY-WRITING COMPETITION



We are both very interested in both writing and drama, with appearances in house, school and external drama. Sam has also written for the RSPB magazine, whilst John, for the past two years, has participated in the Junior Nidderdale Drama Festival, and won Best Actor for

both years. Sam noticed a poster for the "Barclays Young Writers Competition" run through the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough on the Drama notice board at School and told John about it. We then decided to make a joint entry to the competition, after a quick email asking whether this would be allowed. We had written together previously, and had learned that working as a pair kept us motivated to finish a project.

We spent many nights of brainstorming on ideas and characters and quickly settled on an approximate plot (though we kept changing aspects throughout the writing process) and decided to use the form of six short monologues to create our play, meaning each character had a monologue.

We almost missed handing our play in; we missed the last post (on the Friday) and it needed to be at Scarborough by Monday morning, and both our printers had stopped working. Thankfully, we still had the theatre's email address, so instead emailed our script, with a short letter of apology.

We then heard nothing for so long and assumed we had not been successful. The closing date was the 30th March and we received our confirmation letters around mid August. We then realised that our play had been chosen out of about 60 other entries, and had been personally chosen by the famous playwright Alan Ayckbourn who said the following about our play: **"...the two authors have clearly a good ear for vocal pattern and establishment of a character through speech. I suspect that actors would enjoy tackling these roles. Good clear staging..."**

The letter told us that we were invited to go to the Stephen Joseph Theatre to help direct a "rehearsed reading" of our play, which was to be acted out by professional actors to an invited audience.

The dates for the directing and performance were the 29th-31st August, when Sam was away on holiday. We were extremely upset, and we thought that John would have to attend by himself, but two days before the said dates, John received a phone call, saying rehearsed reading and directing process would have to be moved to a later date, due to unexpected circumstances. The dates have now been rearranged to the 19th-21st December, when both Sam and John can attend, and hopefully the Drama and Theatre Studies A-level group will have the opportunity to watch the performance too. The name of the play is 'The Room' and it won the 15-17 age range.

Sam Bell and John May, (L6)

HALLOWEEN AT JOHNSON HOUSE



This is our second year of boarding, but our first Halloween party! To be honest, we didn't think it was going to be successful, but it actually was really good fun! There were lots of games and too much party food because everyone brought in their own share.

We carved out pumpkins for 'The Best Pumpkin Competition' and we had fun carving them although they smelled really bad! Towards the end of the party we went outside and lit our pumpkins which glowed in the dark and made a good display. Overall, we had a fantastic party and we're looking forward to next year!

Molly Lightowler & Harriet Stringer, 2nd Form

SIXTH FORM RE TRIP TO



Boarding the plane from Manchester airport, spirits were high. Five days in New York City stretched ahead of us and we were desperate to get there as soon as possible! However, due to a problem with the aeroplane instead of the usual seven hour flight, we finally touched down in Newark after eleven and a half hours on board and an unexpected stop at an RAF base in Stuart, though repetitive listening to Britney's "Gimme More" did help to pass the time.

We were pleased to see the doors of our youth hostel, at last, and although most people dumped their bags and headed out for a Mexican meal, it was all too much for the Upper Sixth girls who put on their pyjamas and fell into their bunk beds, for some well deserved beauty sleep!

The next day we were up early for a quick breakfast in a typical American diner before a jam packed day of activities which included visiting Ground Zero, the Jewish Heritage Museum, Staten Island, The Empire State Building and the infamous Macy's department store!

We saw some fantastic views of New York from the top of the Rockefeller Centre, climbed the Statue of Liberty and were lucky enough to visit a Buddhist meditation centre in the heart New York City. We also had a fantastic time at the Abyssinian Baptist Church, Central Park, Strawberry Fields, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History. We also exploited our chances to go shopping as much as possible, much to Mr Clarke's dismay. Some of us even worked out the Subway system for ourselves in order to find our way to Bloomingdale's (although one of the group got trapped in the closing doors!), whilst the others headed to M&M world!

We had some fantastic meals out in the Hard Rock Café, Sylvia's soul food, in which we experienced the culture – and corn bread – of Harlem ghetto and also visited Mars! A restaurant which involved a spaceship simulation in order to get to our table! We certainly had a trip to remember, and although we knew we had schoolwork to return to, we were left wanting more. We were sad to wave goodbye to the fantastic city, though we just had time to buy some of America's famous Snapple lemonade before we found ourselves on the plane journey home, luckily without any more emergency landings!

Emily Steed, (L6)

4TH YEAR TRIP TO THE MANCHESTER BUDDHIST CENTRE

On 3rd July, thirty 4th year students visited the Manchester Buddhist Centre. The Centre belongs to the Friends of The Western Buddhist Order (FWBO), a type of Buddhism that was founded in 1967 by Sangharakshita, an English Buddhist monk.

When we arrived we met Nagapriya, a member of the FWBO, who would be teaching us for the day. We started off by learning about meditation and had a short session of Anapanasati meditation, in which you focus on your breathing in order to achieve mental clarity. Everyone in the group was really surprised about its effect, and most of us felt calm and relaxed afterwards. I definitely started to understand why so many Buddhists meditate, and why

it's such an important Buddhist teaching. Afterwards we had lunch at the Earth Café, which is a vegan Fairtrade café and one of the many businesses run within the Buddhist Centre. Most of us enjoyed the café, even if some of the meals were different to what we were used to!

For the afternoon, we discussed in groups and with Nagapriya the Three Universal Truths and the Five Precepts (which are core Buddhist teachings about how Buddhists should live their lives). It was interesting to find out that most Buddhists have different views and interpretations of the Buddha's teachings, and not everyone agrees with every principle, just as with any other religion. For the final part of the day, we did another short meditation session called Metta Bhavana, which develops loving kindness towards others.

We all enjoyed the day, and felt that we'd learned more about how Buddhists live in the modern world, and about how varied Buddhist opinions are. It was definitely a useful trip for our GCSE course.

Sarah Fortune, (5B) and Natasha Mortimer, (5D)

THE RETURN OF PETER PAN...

When Mr Fell and Mrs Deighton first settled on the idea of Peter Pan, many months before the show was even cast, we all knew they had a tough job on their hands. What, with having to recreate the atmosphere of a jungle, a lake, an Indian camp, all the costumes associated with that AND direct and produce a thrilling production, we all knew this wasn't going to be easy. The result however, was astonishing.



The show started with the mysterious sound of voices setting the scene brilliantly, with the sudden sharpness of Nana's barking bringing us back to the real world. Here, we meet the child-like energy and spark of Peter Pan (Laura McCarthy), and a slightly stropky Tinkerbell (Steph White). We are also introduced to the grown-up Wendy (Ellie Duffield), and her younger brothers, John (Michael Gilbert) and Michael (Lewis Haggerty). We had only a few minutes to take it in, before we were taken to where dreams become realities; the Neverland!

Then came the parade of the Neverland inhabitants; the Beasts, followed by the Pirates, and the Indians and Lost Boys. It is here that we are introduced to the menacing figure of Captain Hook (Edd Riley), and the graceful elegance of Tigerlily (Georgie l'Anson).



As the play progressed, we gradually came to learn of the story behind Neverland, behind Peter and the Lost Boys, and Captain Hook and his Pirate band. We follow the story of Peter and Wendy, and are introduced to the glamorous and gentle Queen of the Mermaids (Natalia deHuitray). We see the tragic love triangle

between Wendy, Tinkerbell, and the Mermaid Queen, and Peter's childlike innocence shines throughout. We discover the truth behind the Captain's hook, behind his hatred of Peter, and we even begin to sympathise with him, when we see the dysfunctional crew with which he has to try and kill Pan. And throughout the whole play, the menacing presence of a crocodile is never-ending....

Overall, all of us involved had an absolutely amazing time. It was great fun, working with great people, and acting on a great set to a great audience. It was the most fun we've ever had on stage, and it will definitely stay in my mind for a long time to come.

Edd Riley and Laura McCarthy, (4C)

HOUSE DRAMA 2007

It's a fascinating experience to watch the year-on-year developments in the ways in which the houses tackle their productions.

This year was particularly remarkable for the fact that three of the four productions were successful in adaptation work or scripting by the students themselves (and in fact the judges' Special Award this year went to one of the scriptwriters, Emily Steed, for her work on 'Cinderella'.)



It says much for the growing confidence and competence of the experienced actors that they are willing to take on the challenge of shaping not just the direction of their production, but now even the script itself.

Whether it was the crowd-pleasing colour of Cinderella, the fizzy wit of this year's other fairy-tale offering 'The Real Princess', or the epic range and energy of School House's 'Hercules', there was a clear message that the competition has now gone beyond simply being a vehicle for actors and directors to practice their craft, and is reaching new levels of ambition. Witness the stunning

experimentation with colour and costuming style by all four houses; the introduction of dance and live song; the subtle but powerful technical touches, and interestingly, the fact that none of this year's productions relied upon big colourful sets to hold their audience, with relatively simple backgrounds allowing far more focus on the actors themselves.

The four productions, as always, involved huge teams of actors and technicians from across the age range, superbly marshalled by their sixth form directors, and they were brilliantly supported by big audiences on both evenings.

The standard of acting was typically impressive, with a number of new faces debuting alongside the experienced hands, and it is clear that strength in depth continues to be real feature of drama at RGS. Of the tremendous range of performances, the judges were particularly impressed by George Ogram and Bryony Seager, who were awarded the titles of best actor and actress in the competition, whilst the main prize for best overall production was won this year by De Grey's terrific performance of Willy Russell's 'Our Day Out.'

Mr T Fell

Parents' Association NEWS UPDATE

BURNS' NIGHT

On Saturday 26th January 2008, at 7.30pm.

Venue: School Hall.

Tickets £15.00.

Places are limited to 100.

Tickets on sale from the school office from 20th November 2007

Please make cheques payable to RGSPA and address the envelope 'Burns' Night'.

Tickets will be allocated on a strictly first come basis.

Traditional Burns' Night food will be served.

Music by 'Twiddling Thumbs'.

FEEDBACK

Cake & Tombola stall

Many thanks to everyone who donated cakes and items for the tombola, (more donations of cakes would have been welcome).

Call My Bluff Wine & Cheese

A most enjoyable evening. Thank you for supporting this event.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

Carol Service in Ripon Cathedral

Date Thursday 20th December

Time 7.30pm

Donations of mince pies are always very welcome.

Family Quiz Night

29th February 2008

May Ball

Saturday 17th May 2008

OLD RIPONIANS ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT: PAUL FREEMAN.
SECRETARY: ALISON FRANKLAND
HONORARY TREASURER: JOHN SAUL

Welcome to Old Rips News. Please let us know if you have interesting news to include on future occasions. Calling all non-teaching staff. At the last AGM the constitution was amended to entitle any non-teaching staff to join the ORA with the same rights as teachers. I hope many of you will take advantage of this change.

Jenny Bellamy has completed her Foundation degree in Contemporary Performance at Leeds Metropolitan University. She was very pleased to perform her final show, a one woman show based on three of Alan Bennett's monologues, to sixth

form students who are studying for AS and A2 in Drama and Theatre Studies.

Edward Weldon (1981-88), who studied Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art and who was one of Bloomberg New Contemporaries in 2000, has been invited to submit some work to the Royal Academy. He is currently living in Germany with his wife and family.

Another artistic success is that of Helen Exelby whose work in photography is becoming increasingly popular. Her large scale prints, images of natural materials, already exhibited in both Ripon and Newcastle, are to be exhibited in London.

J. B. (Geography) Smith is now living on Tyneside. He is handily placed to compete in the Great North Run and this year completed it for the ninth time.

Congratulations to Claire Beer on her recent marriage to Iain George Preston.

Adam Thorpe is launching a business to provide short term lets in luxury apartments. It is initially based in Harrogate and aimed at the conference trade, but Adam has ambitions to expand his business nationally.

We regret to announce the death of Professor D. G. Kendall FRS (1929-36).

Alison Frankland (1985-92) is the new secretary of ORA. Alison is a translator, proof-reader and lecturer in modern languages and is already working hard in this new role.

My good wishes to you for 2008.

Mrs A Saul

OBITUARY- HAROLD KEMPSTER (1912-2007)

I met Harold Kempster, Head of Modern Languages at Ripon Grammar School (1947- 1962) at a Speech Day in 1991, when I was Deputy Head of the school.

It was Brian Stanley's last Speech Day and he had invited an Old Boy, Norman Barrett, Ring Master of Blackpool Tower Circus to present the prizes. He appeared on our stage dressed in his splendid ring master's costume and his speech included teaching the Head Boy and Girl to juggle and a rendering of 'Albert and the Lion.' Never before or since has there been a Speech Day which matched that one for sheer fun!

One of the audience, who enjoyed the fun perhaps more than anyone else was Harold Kempster, who always came to every Speech Day, but he particularly enjoyed this one as he had taught Norman Barrett, as well as Gordon Lakin, David Curry M.P. and John Richmond, who were also there. Harold laughed at all the jokes and had a great time after Speech Day, exchanging memories with his former students. As the years went by he still came to every Speech Day seeming only a little older, but still driving himself to Ripon from York. At his last Speech Day, in 2006, he was again a little older (94 by then) and a lot more deaf, but we still exchanged our usual jokes and tales of family members. At this year's Speech Day, the first that I had known without his presence, those who remembered him, felt a significant emptiness.

Harold was born in Bedfordshire and educated at Bedford Modern School, followed by St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, where he read French and German. Before the Second World

War, he taught at one of Birmingham's grammar schools and during the war, as a conscientious objector, he joined the Friends' Ambulance Unit. Afterwards, he was dismissed from his teaching post in Birmingham for his moral beliefs, but became Head of Modern Languages at Ripon Grammar School, where he threw himself enthusiastically into most aspects of school life. He was involved in boarding, rugby, cricket, scouting, drama, school trips to France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and he helped to re-establish the Old Riponians' Association after the war and supported it until his death.

As a teacher, everyone has memories of his kindness and humanity. He commanded a natural respect from all and is particularly remembered for his consideration for those boys needing support, either because they found difficulty grasping the rules of French grammar or because they had come from another school where French was not taught. He was particularly pleased that he managed to introduce A Level German into the Sixth Form. Harold left RGS in 1962 when the school amalgamated with Ripon Girls' High School.

He moved with his wife, Jean and their daughter, Elizabeth Anne, to Camberley where he continued his teaching career. He never forgot Ripon and the Yorkshire countryside, for when he retired in 1973, the Kempsters moved back North to live in Dunnington, York, and Harold renewed his contact with RGS. He died peacefully in April this year survived by his daughter, Elizabeth, son-in-law, Keith and grandchildren, Andrew and Dominique. He is much missed by all who knew him.

Jenny Bellamy

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

Flight Lieutenant Stuart Hague, pupil at RGS 1985-1992

I have just come back from another tour of Afghanistan flying Chinooks with 1310 Flight based in Kandahar and Camp Bastion. We first went out there in March 2006 and go back out every 8 months for a period of about 9-10 weeks. To begin with the living conditions were very basic, living in tents and eating very average food, but now things are a little more comfortable. The threat to aviation out there changes by the day, but this time we are starting to attempt more audacious missions taking the fight to the enemy and driving him back into the mountains for the winter. In spite of public opinion here, we are indeed making a difference to the country.

I have seen a great improvement in the operations out there, and we are taking and holding territory traditionally held by the Taliban. These are now being developed with community services such as schools for both boys and girls being opened. The locals are obviously battle-weary, and most of the fighters that move into these areas are foreign fighters and not from this part of Afghanistan, or not from Afghanistan at all. They do target civilians indiscriminately, and we routinely witnessed suicide bombings of schools and markets. The Taliban forbid education for girls, and schools that teach them are attacked regularly.

Children are often used to fight, and too often are the casualties we pick up. One of the main jobs they do for the enemy are to sit and wait with a mobile phone to warn them we are coming. We are then attacked as we come in. We have three main jobs to do when we are there; the first is daily tasking to move people and supplies around the many forward operating bases.

The second is 'Incident Response Team', which is basically an armed air ambulance, and the third is 'Deliberate Operations' which are very carefully planned to achieve an offensive aim, usually to take control back of a piece of land or town. The daily tasking can become routine, but you do have to remain on your guard as you are often attacked when you least expect it.

In the second week out there we were coming into land when the landing site exploded as it was hit by a mortar round fired by the Taliban. We were very lucky not to be hit by shrapnel and had to wait as the Apache escorts hit the firing point with missiles. The Apaches always escort us wherever we go, and we are also armed with 3 door guns, one of which is a rotary gatling mini gun capable of up to 4000 rounds a minute. This tends to keep the enemy's heads down when we defend ourselves. The 'Incident Response' flights are usually quite exciting. By definition we go to where something dangerous has just happened, usually a suicide bomb attack, an ambush on our troops, or simple injuries from

things such as road accidents. This time we were particularly busy as there was a serious bomb attack on a busy market. We scrambled late at night and were airborne for four and a half hours ferrying casualties from the incident to fill the hospitals around the country.

We often have to be careful as an attack can serve as a 'come-on' to call us in and then launch an attack on the helicopter. As we can carry over 40 people a successful attack would be a real political coup. I was very privileged to be asked to lead an 'Air Assault' deep into enemy territory in the final weeks of the tour. We had to take a valley where some of the high-ranking Taliban commanders lived with their 400 troops, trap them there and then sanitise the valley to return it to the locals. The valley was described as 'non-permissive', meaning they had control and we couldn't mount foot patrols or fly over as it was too dangerous. The plan was to land with the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles in the middle of the night and to flood the valley with troops and take them by surprise.

It took weeks to plan and rehearse as the threat was very real. This was something that had not been attempted in Afghanistan before, and it simply had to go well. We took in 5 Chinooks and had the support of 2 Apaches, 2 Harriers, a Nimrod, a Lynx, several US fast jets on standby as well as spy planes and satellites watching events unfold. As we rounded the last mountain we flew straight over the enemy commander's houses at 50 feet, watching their guards running for their anti aircraft machine-guns. We had the SAS on the ground waiting for us, and they had already killed some of the enemy guards to help us get in without incident. When 5 Chinooks come into land it kicks up a huge dust cloud. As the dust settled and the troops were running off it became clear how close we were to the enemy; literally through the hedge right next to us. The troops were off in less than 25 seconds and we all lifted to go in for a second run.

This was where we were most concerned as they now knew we were coming, but as it happens we had already overwhelmed them. We then remained airborne for another 8 hours to finish off delivering the artillery and support elements. One of the Apaches was hit in the rocket pod and had to jettison it as the rockets were catching fire, and one of the US ambulance helicopters was badly hit as he came into pick up some casualties. All in all we were very lucky not to get hit ourselves. This was the last trip for now and I was very glad it all went to plan. Within a day or two I was back on the plane home and it all seems very far away.

Flt Lt Stuart Hague