



### From the Headmaster

Next week marks the anniversary of the fire which devastated large parts of the Old Building. During the early hours of Sunday 2 December 1962, an electrical fault – so it was believed – led to severe fire damage to many of the rooms in the historic heart of the School resulting in the collapse of the roof over Big School and significant water damage to much of the site, including books in the Chained Library. The Fifth Form boys who were housed in Hamonde House lost all of their exercise books and textbooks in the fire; in addition, about one-third of the books in the Mallison Library were damaged beyond further use. Six fire engines attended the blaze which, according to the account of one student at the time, featured on the evening news that night ahead of items on India, China, U Thant (the UN Secretary General), Nikita Khrushchev (the former First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) and – perhaps most significantly of all – the draw for the European Cup!

According to Sturley's history of the School, the fire was a great personal shock for the Headmaster, Mr Hallowes, who took genuine pride in the School; however, the enduring memory was how the community pulled together and persevered despite such challenging circumstances. Indeed, it is testament to the boys that, only the following year, the award of eleven Oxbridge open scholarships and exhibitions was regarded as so significant that the School was granted an additional day's holiday. The boys took an active role in rescuing books from the damaged buildings, while Pewley School and the County Council provided temporary accommodation and teaching space. As Sturley concluded, "The life of the School continued under some difficulty but unchecked." In the face of challenge and adversity, it is perhaps fitting that the School's own history provides specific evidence that tenacity and resilience were, and still remain, core values which must be at the very heart of the success of RGS boys.

### Latest News

[View the full news archive](#)

**Academic:** In the recently published *Sunday Times Parent Power* league table of results based upon students' performance at GCSE and A Level, the RGS was delighted that the boys' examination successes were formally recognised. For the second year running, the RGS finished in fourteenth position out of 424 schools nationwide: the third placed boys' school in the country. The RGS was also delighted to be ranked as the top independent school in the country in the influential *Sunday Times Parent Power* league table of university destinations. Just under a quarter of those RGS boys who left in July have now begun courses at Oxford and Cambridge and just under 90% are studying at a Russell Group university: a figure which rises to 94% when Bath, a university regularly among the top ten institutions, is added to the list. The boys – and the wider community including staff, governors and parents – deserve great credit; the formal public recognition is richly deserved.

**CREST Awards:** Thirteen Upper Sixth Form boys have been awarded their CREST Gold Awards for projects carried out during the summer holiday. Each project involved spending 2 – 4 weeks doing original scientific research at a university or firm, from the local area to Switzerland.

**Mathematics:** Out of 68 entries in the Senior Mathematics Challenge, 27 boys achieved Gold awards, 22 Silver and 16 Bronze. Seven boys qualified in the top 1% to reach the Mathematical Olympiad and Upper Sixth Formers **James Hilditch** and **Jae-Yeon Lim** top scored with 120 out of 125 points.

**Music:** The Joint RGS and GHS Schools' Chamber Choir became the first school choir ever to sing Evensong in the chapel at Trinity College, Cambridge. After an enlightening tour of the college and discussions with current choral and organ scholars, the choir did not disappoint as their performance was truly magnificent. The Ensembles Concert in the Auditorium continued a busy term of musical events as over 140 boys in total were involved in an uplifting, rousing evening of music.

## Sports News

[View the full sports results](#)

**Chess:** The 1st VI recorded a 5 – 1 victory in their match against King's College School, Wimbledon. On an individual level, **James Golding** (3E) will be participating in the Hastings International Chess Congress and he will be playing in the Masters section along with the top Grandmasters.

**Cross-country:** In the Junior Knole Run at Sevenoaks, the A team came third out of 40 schools; **Sam Martin** (2R) was the individual winner out of 300 runners. This excellent result followed on from the intermediate team being placed third in the south-east regional finals of the English Schools Cross-country Cup and thereby qualifying for the National Finals.

**Fencing:** In the Under 11 age-group of the Cocks Moor Épée Championship, **Leo Kamstra** (1C) won gold. The Under 18 teams also impressed against City of London Freeman's School, winning all three matches.

**Rugby:** In the block fixture against Judd School, the senior teams all recorded victories from the 1st XV through to the Under 16B team. The Under 15 and Under 13 teams continued the dominance on the pitch in some exceptionally tough matches against Abingdon by winning all their matches; special mention should go to the Under 12C whose strong performance gave them a 45 – 10 victory.

**Skiing:** **Charlie Aldridge-Bate** (1C) has been selected for the English Schools Ski Squad and invited to attend the training camp in Italy in March.

## Forthcoming Events

[View the School Calendar](#)

Saturday 28 November	Parents' Association Christmas Party at the Radisson Blu Edwardian Hotel
Tuesday 1 December	Market Day Concert in Holy Trinity Church
Wednesday 2 December	Orchestral Concert in Holy Trinity Church
Thursday 3 December	Junior Drama Production <i>Something Wicked</i> in the Auditorium (first of four performances)
Saturday 5 December	Parents' Association Christmas Fair in Great Hall
Wednesday 9 December	Carol Service in Holy Trinity Church
Thursday 10 December	Carol Service in Guildford Cathedral
Friday 11 December	Term ends