

THE REGISTER

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The termly newsletter of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford



ACADEMIC

A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS


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EVENTS

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A HARSH LESSON

There's a harsh lesson to be learned from the RGS's 100th anniversary. It's not that we've been around for a century, but that we've been around for a century of excellence. The RGS has a long history of excellence, and it's this excellence that has made us a school that is proud to be a part of. The RGS has a long history of excellence, and it's this excellence that has made us a school that is proud to be a part of.

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KING FOR A DAY

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THE HEADMASTER WRITES ...

At the RGS we have always been acutely aware that as an institution we cannot stand alone and, as Guildford's grammar school, we have defined ourselves by our community: whether it is the Tudor Building which is such an iconic landmark or the fact that as a town-centre school there is a choice of well over ten coffee shops within short walking distance of the school gates! All schools face significant changes in the future and one of the major risks facing schools such as ours is isolation. The era of single schools which stand alone, relying on their own resources to innovate and develop, will soon be over. The future is about partnership: locally, nationally and internationally.

Our focus continues to be on utilising our educational expertise for the

benefit of others by cultivating important relationships: providing opportunities for local students irrespective of their family's financial means; developing a centre of excellence for progressive and collaborative teaching; cementing mutually beneficial relationships with our Old Guildfordians; and building strong, sustainable links with a number of local and international schools. In all these partnerships, our aim is to learn, to share our expertise and to enhance the reputation of the RGS by developing academic excellence more broadly.

This edition of *The Register* celebrates many of the highlights of this last term, many of which simply could not have taken place without the sense of collaboration, support and trust which lie at the heart of this ethos: skills in

the future which are going to be increasingly invaluable. In addition to providing the all-important supply of high-quality latte or espresso, this outward as well as inward perspective will ensure that partnerships remain at the heart of what makes the RGS such a special community and also an integral part of the community.

John

A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

The RGS was delighted to host the Young Enterprise regional event, the Y Factor, as many of the South's leading companies competed. With an array of VIPs in attendance, including two Mayors and local business leaders, this was a vibrant and dynamic event. The competition comprised two categories: the first judged the businesses as a whole including finance, innovation and presentation; the second was the e-advertising competition. RGS company *GoBillou* swept the board with their multi-lingual cookbook, taking first place in both competitions; another RGS company, *Zenith*, took second place in both categories with their excellent revision guides. In the area final, both companies continued to dominate as *GoBillou* was crowned West Surrey Company of the Year and also won best trade stand, while *Zenith* finished the night as runners-up and also won best business plan. Yousuf Mirza, Managing Director of *GoBillou*, commented: "We are absolutely delighted to have won these awards. We came up with the idea when we were brainstorming and brought together



two things we thought would be popular: cooking and education. We have had great interest from schools and booksellers, as well as people who can see how much fun it is to learn a language as you cook."

THE APPLIANCE OF SCIENCE

The RGS has continued its enviable reputation in the Big Bang UK Young Scientists and Engineers Competition in which Rory Hyatt and Oliver Platt entered their CREST Gold Projects to progress to the final of this prestigious event. Rory's project, *The Synthesis of Biferrocene*, was carried out under the supervision of Professor Nick Long, the Chair of Inorganic Chemistry at Imperial College.

In turn, Oliver investigated the physical properties and applications of refrigerants in Dr Pollock's research group at University College London. The boys were praised on the extremely high quality of their work; one of judges noted: "Your passion shines through and I am sure you have the attitude and aptitude to be a great scientist." The students will showcase their work to more

than 70,000 people in the Big Bang Fair to be held in the Birmingham NEC. Head of Chemistry, Wai-Shun Lau, commented: "This is the sixth consecutive year that RGS boys have made the final. It highlights not only their conceptual grasp of complex issues but also their ability to come up with innovative, practical solutions to the world's current and future challenges."



THE BOYS IN BLUE

RGS students enjoyed outstanding success in the latest round of Oxbridge applications with the final total of 30 offers – 12 from Oxford and 18 from Cambridge – testament not only to their ability but also the strong culture of mutual support which exists among the boys. A broad range of subject areas were covered with History proving to be the most successful single subject. The collective science disciplines accounted for nine offers, with the broad spectrum of Ancient and Modern Languages providing a further seven successes. Headmaster Dr Jon Cox commented: "Although Oxbridge

application dominates the headlines in the media, it is only one facet of our Sixth Form experience; a significant number of our boys apply to other universities for very measured reasons. Nevertheless, we are very proud of all those who achieved Oxbridge offers. As well as their academic profile, it was their genuine love of learning, their tenacity and flexibility at interview and their engagement in many other aspects of school and community life that enabled them to secure the initial offer. It is this, as much as their grades, that will set up RGS boys for a successful future at university and beyond."



SCHOOL REPORT

Art: Zac Harrison's painting in response to the *Visions of the Future* theme has reached the final of the Young Surrey Artist of the Year Competition 2017; it will be displayed at the Riverside Café and Gallery.

Chemistry: Joshua Cudby was one of the top 55 students out of 3,010 participants in the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge and won a Roentgenium Award: a crystal trophy (featuring a 3d² atomic orbital).

Mathematics: In the national Intermediate Mathematics Challenge RGS boys received an impressive 38 gold, 29 silver and 15 bronze certificates. Thirty boys qualified for the invitation-only, follow-up Kangaroo round. The top score was 110, achieved by Salvatore Elia, but equally impressive was Kush Christie-Verma's score of 94 as he is only in the Third Form.

Music: Nicholas Edwards and Samuel Jones were runners-up in the Senior and Junior Divisions respectively of the London Organ Competition held at St Clements Dane Church in London. Samuel then went on to win both the Under 19 class and the Bach 16 and over class in the Organ Competition at the Godalming Festival.

Physics: Callum Spencer and Thomas Spackman were both awarded Top Gold in this year's prestigious British Physics Olympiad, reserved for the leading 50 applicants in the country, and they progress to the next round. In addition, RGS boys secured one gold, three silver and four bronze awards.

National Schools Quiz: The RGS team of George Glover, Harry Johnson, William Klintworth and Alexander Norris made quick progress through three regional rounds of the National Schools Quiz Challenge general knowledge competition to reach the Regional Final.



MRS BROWN'S BOYS

We were delighted to welcome Jenny Brown and her sons to the official opening of the John Brown Building, the latest in an ambitious set of building projects at the RGS which has included the creation of the Art School, Music School, Sports Hall and Sixth Form Centre in the last fifteen years. John's tenure as Chairman coincided with arguably the most defining period of the School's history, when the School returned to the independent sector in 1977. DM Sturley in the School History notes that John epitomised the RGS philosophy "with absolute honesty and modesty and with unfailing courtesy combined with quiet determination". The intimate opening ceremony in the presence of John's family provided the opportunity to express formally the School's gratitude. As the Headmaster, Dr Jon Cox, noted: "John recognised the importance of education and of inspiring young minds. I believe he would be extremely proud of what is being achieved at the RGS today and the vision we have for the future, which has resulted in this wonderful addition to our teaching facilities. Our new building is an exciting learning environment which enhances still further the education we can offer to RGS students."





WHO DUNNIT

Staff and students embraced with gusto the annual extravaganza of literature-related fun: World Book Day 2017, with this year's theme of crime and detection. The day began with the ultimate murder mystery: the shocking revelation that there had been a murder in the Mallison Library. With the suspects' filmed statements and other evidence gathered at the scene of the crime, keen detectives from throughout the

School investigated the mystery of the death of – fictional – Miss Marsden throughout the day. The Second Form took part in an in-depth workshop in the afternoon at the end of which the murderer – over-protective parent Zenobia Zoggs – was revealed. Elsewhere, the theme was enthusiastically incorporated into the catering and the curriculum with the ancient and modern languages, in particular, coming up with ingenious

and innovative cryptic challenges. To add further to the colour of the day, Tuppence Beresford, Nancy Drew, Sarah Lund, Miss Marple and Kay Scarpetta were among the characters depicted by staff. As Librarian Tamsin Farthing acknowledged: "The day was a great success and, once again, served to show the enduring power of books, as plot, character and intrigue fuelled the boys' imaginations."





SARGENT IN COMMAND

The RGS Burns Supper and Ceilidh provided another irresistible evening of poetry, good food and highland dancing. After a health and safety brief delivered in the style of a Burns poem, something new and wonderful happened: having in previous years been delivered by Ms Moorehead and Mr Woodman, this year an RGS student delivered the intimidating Address to the Haggis for the first time. As the piper played in the haggis, Matthew Sargent stood and took his own place in the RGS Burns Night hall of fame. A delivery of humour, clarity and joy, given in Matthew's own charming and unique style, prompted rapturous applause and a comment from the

professional piper that it was as good a delivery as he had seen: high praise indeed. After the delicious haggis, another English star, Nicholas Hall delivered a thoughtful and perceptive Immortal Memory before Philip Leamon thanked outgoing chef and Burns stalwart Peter Harper and signed off himself for his last RGS Burns Night. The fabulous dinner and addresses, however, were simply the precursor to the energetic, joyous and occasionally dangerous Ceilidh, where all danced the night away, if not always in perfect harmony, then in perfect spirits.



LINKED IN

As part of our ongoing partnership with our link schools in Nepal, we were delighted to welcome Bikash Raj Paudel, a teacher of Health, Population and Environment and Deputy Headteacher at Bhu Pu School, and Purna Devi Neupane, a teacher of Science at Janabikkas government school. For the first time, we were pleased to invite the staff and students of Tormead School to join in the partnership. The focus of the week was very much on the classroom and over five days our Nepali visitors had contact with almost every single boy: from pastoral, to linguistic, to topical and cultural themes, such as gender equality. In addition, a packed itinerary provided the opportunity for our guests to experience the beach at West Wittering, the colleges of Oxford, and a full day of sight-seeing in London. Ash Shakeri, International Links Co-ordinator, commented: "I am thrilled at the warmth of welcome that our guests received everywhere they went. The week has provided a much clearer sense of where this partnership can go next: there is genuine excitement about the chance we have to improve education in Nepal and also to give our students a rich cultural experience."





A HARSH LESSON

"You can't beat a good public school for learning to hide your true feelings", acknowledged George Reeve as he convincingly played the gay, disruptive schoolboy Guy Bennett. Julian Mitchell's rich and moving drama set in an English public school in the 1930s, which is reeling from the suicide of one of its students, is by turns funny, painful and relevant as the actors powerfully captured the hierarchies, the endless quest for power and status, and the harsh cruelties and realities of public-school life. The richly developed and brilliantly defined characters sparked off each other through the slick dialogue steeped in the prejudices and attitudes of the time. Benjamin Hawken conveyed the intensity of the mischievous, scholarly communist Tommy Judd: "I don't have to try to be clever, I am clever!" Light relief came from Wharton, played by Dominic Baker, who portrayed the comic-pathetic fag with real sensitivity. A talented cast presented the idiosyncratic characters with conviction and no little maturity; in particular, Fraser Dupuis deliciously captured the rebellious uncle, Vaughan Cunningham. The atmospheric set, lighting, sound and costume evoked strongly the bourgeois mood of the time. Despite the era, the play still resonated as the audience reflected on a play which probes deep into the psyche of each individual and their battles with their private and public personas.









MURDER THEY WROTE

The Beecham Boys from the A Level Drama students was a superbly imaginative and quirky piece that had its genesis in Magritte's famous painting of the missing face of a bowler-hatted man and the Tessimond poem *The Man in a Bowler Hat* which begins "I am the unnoticed, the unnoticeable man". The boys took the idea of anonymity hiding a dark and somewhat brutal impulse for their two – almost identical – characters, Mr Bartholomew Beecham played by Cameron Brett and Mr Bertie Beecham by Harry Somerville. Further stylistic inspiration came from *A Clockwork Orange*, *American Psycho* and a light dusting of *Are You Being Served?* The two eponymous office clerks are bullied and humiliated by their boss and so begins a plot infused with unexpected twists and turns. Nancy McClean, the Head of Drama, commented: "Despite the bloody and violent narrative the boys used clever non-naturalistic techniques that really showcased their acting abilities. The murder was done very tastefully as a ballet sequence to Rossini's *The Thieving Magpie* where the Beecham boys donned see-through plastic macs and Marigold gloves before ripping sheets of newspaper to shreds: a brilliantly conceived metaphor for the killing of the hated boss."





KING FOR A DAY

The final of the RGS Musician of the Year, *The Steynor Prize*, proved to be an exquisite evening of music which had the appreciative audience captivated from start to finish by the extraordinary talent and diversity of the boys. The finalists performed a programme which was refined, sophisticated and engaging in equal measure but all with the same exacting standards of musicianship. The School was honoured to welcome as adjudicator Michael Chance CBE who has established a worldwide reputation as one of the foremost exponents of the male alto voice. Michael had the unenviable task of selecting a winner and admitted that the decision was made all the

harder as it was the highest standard of any school event he had had the privilege of witnessing. As he acknowledged, each of the performances demonstrated astonishing virtuosity and composure and it was humbling to hear such extraordinary talent. By the narrowest of margins, Michael awarded *The Steynor Prize* to a performance which had displayed poise, which was scrupulously attentive to the wide variety of markings in the piece and which had lovely overall sense of architecture: Simon King's breathtaking rendition of *Chaconne* by Bach-Busoni.





ROCH STARS

The Joint Schools' Chamber Choir, comprising RGS and Guildford High School students, travelled to the city of Rochester to sing Evensong in the historic cathedral. Once home to the author Charles Dickens, Rochester's picturesque cathedral sits nestled in the centre of the medieval high street and, dating back to 604AD, is Britain's second oldest cathedral containing a magnificent fourteenth century Chapter Library door, one of the oldest doors in England. Despite a rather imposing façade, the interior feels rather intimate and provided the perfect setting for the choir's choice of music for the evening

service. Alongside the appointed psalm and office hymn, the choir performed Henry Purcell's setting of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* and Antonio Lotti's *Crucifixus*. As Sam Orchard, Assistant Director of Music, remarked: "It takes real skill for any choir to approach this repertoire but the choir rose to the challenge and performed it with aplomb. The Joint Schools' Chamber Choir now turns its attention to preparing for our forthcoming tour of Northern Italy where we will be singing the mass at St Mark's Basilica in Venice.

FLOODING BACK

Combining the sharp wit of Graham Norton and the reassuring professionalism of Kirsty Young, the RGS's very own aficionado, Director of Music Peter White, proved to be a force to be reckoned with for this term's King's Lecture. With the Auditorium transformed into a plush chat-show venue, the School was delighted to welcome back eminent Old Guildfordian Dr David Flood, Director of Music at Canterbury Cathedral. David provided an intriguing insight into his schooldays at the RGS, his experiences at Oxford as an organ scholar, and then his professional career. Questions were interspersed with pieces of music chosen by David which took the audience on an emotive journey from Gilbert and Sullivan to Elgar, from Bach to Handel. David regaled the audience with colourful anecdotes of the irony of his name during the great floods of Guildford, of playing at the Maundy Service in the presence of the Queen during her Golden Jubilee and the influence of the charismatic maverick Allan Wicks CBE on his career. David's passion for the organ shone through as he referred to the megalomania which is inherent in all organists to master the organ, or as he put it to "control the beast".





BODING WELL

Pennyhill Park provided the perfect setting for the charity event of the term as the combination of glamour and generosity ensured a night to remember, with our Nepali visitors as guests of honour. The School's links with Cambodia began with the construction of the RGS link school at Tiem Kram, Ratanakiri province, in partnership with the charity, *United World Schools*, in 2010. The local children speak no English, and many do not even speak the national Khmer language, so the boys need to find other methods of communication to teach their lessons in logic, music, art and sport. The forthcoming expedition, as well as giving the RGS boys the opportunity to involve themselves in the school, also provides a focus-point for the fundraising required to keep Tiem Kram School running. The school is 100% dependent on funds donated to stay open. A spectacular black-tie event included live music, magic and a Cambodian-themed meal. Thanks to the generous donation of prizes and auction items – including a signed Six Nations 2017 England shirt from Old Guildfordian and full England international Jack Clifford – over £18,000 was raised from the ball alone, thus securing the immediate future of Tiem Kram and continuing a lasting legacy in one of the poorest areas of Cambodia.



NET GAINS

The immaculate pitches of Bradstone Brook have continued to witness the free-flowing, tactically-astute football which has become synonymous with RGS teams in recent years as the four teams, and more than 70 boys, have competed in over 40 matches. On a competitive fixture list, the 4th XI, captained by Charles Waller, only lost one match, while the 3rd XI, led by Alexander Marshall, averaged over three goals a game. The 2nd XI, with captain James Marsh, reached the quarterfinal of the London Independent Schools' Cup. A young 1st XI, captained by Andrew Parrott, improved immeasurably throughout the season and top goal scorer and player of the season Ryan Hoffmann was one of a number of impressive Lower Sixth Form footballers playing regularly in the top team. Adam Lowe, Head of Football, commented: "With the 1st XI reaching the quarterfinals of the Trinity Cup and also defeating the likes of Wilson's School, football at the RGS continues to impress on the Independent Schools' circuit. The future looks very bright for an exciting crop of players."



TRUMP TRUMPED

The phrase Super Tuesday has become synonymous with political voting in the USA; however, this was trumped by events in Hampshire and Surrey this term as Super Tuesday was superseded by – according to Director of Sport Ian Wilkes – Super Duper Tuesday. Ranked masses of First Form boys crossed the county border in both directions as for the only the second time in the School's

history, every single member of the First Form competed simultaneously in competitive hockey fixtures against Portsmouth Grammar School. Well over 100 RGS boys were involved and ten fixtures were played, both home and away, and the matches served to highlight the value of such an initiative: irrespective of the team, boys represented the School with pride, spirit, good humour and no little skill as evidenced by

the fantastic set of results which, due to the philosophy of participation rather than success, we are unable to mention! After the event Ian Wilkes commented: "Sport for all is often quoted as part of schools' rhetoric; however, this incredible event went some way to proving that it is a reality at the RGS. To see the enjoyment and passion from all boys as they put on an RGS shirt was absolutely fantastic."



SRI-MENDOUS

With English cricket, and climate, failing to provide the necessary inspiration, Head of Cricket Chris Sandbach decided drastic measures were required to ensure pre-season instilled the required passion, precision and prowess. As one of the leading forces in international cricket, Sri Lanka provided the perfect location for a week's cricket. Five matches in seven days was always going to be a tough challenge in 35-degree heat but the boys responded fantastically well. From a number of excellent individual performances, of particular note were Benji Thomas' remarkable 100 in the first game and

Alastair Curran's destructive 71 in Colombo. Chris commented: "This tour is something that the boys will remember for a long time to come. Schoolboy sport – and the associated highs and lows – is certainly up there as one of the best times of your life. Touring and sport in general is all about the experiences you share as a squad and it was great to see the boys embrace Sri Lanka life to the full." Culturally, the tourists visited the Foundation of Goodness charity project, saw the effects of the 2004 Tsunami, and visited the Temple of the Tooth, a tea factory and an elephant orphanage.



CROWNING GLORY

Hockey at the RGS picked up where it left off last season with extraordinary, and increasing, numbers of boys playing in competitive fixtures. In just nine weeks, RGS teams were involved in nearly 200 fixtures: an incredible effort from all boys and staff. Highlights of a successful term included the Under 14A team which made it to the regional quarterfinals and the Under 16As which finished top in their pool and beat Cranleigh School in the regional quarterfinals. The 1st XI has had another satisfying season, beating St George's College, Weybridge and Lancing College convincingly in the National Plate competition. On an individual note, RGS has seen seven boys selected for the England Hockey Performance Centres as well as Joshua Powell who has been selected for the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence programme. The highlight of the season, however, was undoubtedly the 3rd



XI team which played 16 and won 16 to be officially crowned the best 3rd XI team in the country. They saved their best performance for last, where they found themselves snatching victory with a matter of seconds left in their season. Bear Grylls and 3rd XI captain Devon MacMillan are clearly united by the same philosophy: "Survival can be summed up in three words: never give up. That's the heart of it really. Just keep trying."

SPORTS SHORTS

Chess: At the London Chess Classic in the major upset of the first round, 13-year-old Alexander Golding held the 27-year-old American Grandmaster Hrant Melkumyan to a draw. In addition, Amardip Ahluwalia was selected for the England National Junior Squad and finished as top England player. The 1st team won all their games to secure the Division One title of the Surrey County Chess Association. The 2nd and 3rd teams followed suit to also finish the season as champions of their respective divisions.

Cross-Country: In the light of the Surrey School County Championships seven RGS boys have been selected to run for Surrey. Oliver Hurdle took bronze in the highly competitive senior boys race.

Fencing: Leo Kamstra proudly wore national stripes in his first fencing competition representing England; he has also been selected for the Great Britain

team. In the British Schools' Teams Fencing Championships, our Under 18 team secured bronze medals in the boys épée while in the Under 13 boys foil, the RGS came fifth.

Ice Hockey: William Lawson, already captain of the Guildford Under 15 team and also part of the South West of England side, has been now selected for the Under 15 England team for the 2016 – 17 season.

Rugby: Henry Paremain was part of the winning Harlequins side at the Academy Finals day: a fantastic achievement topped off by his award of the rugby scholarship to Durham University.

Sailing: Oliver Perkins has been selected for the Great Britain Optimist sailing team.

Shooting: Our VIII has achieved the extraordinary feat of remaining unbeaten against any team this term. Highlights included inflicting only the second defeat in ten years on Wellington

College in a 10-bull match by 759 – 756; the RGS was also responsible for their other defeat two years ago.

Skiing: The RGS ski race team travelled to Bormio in Italy to compete in the 2017 English Alpine Championships. Despite stiff competition, all the RGS boys were placed in the top 40 nationally in their age groups to qualify for the British Championships.

Swimming: RGS boys competed in both the Guildford District Schools Swimming Championships, in which the RGS finished third overall, and the Surrey Secondary Schools Individual Championships with notable success. Max Windle has been selected to represent the South East Schools Division at the National Swimming Championships.

AND FINALLY ...



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Jan 11

#RGSCCharity

Thanks to @SSChospices for today's assembly: inspirational support & care for young people with life-limiting conditions.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Jan 27

#RGSGuildford

Delighted to have won Best Facebook Performance in the Independent School Category #EdurankAwards.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Feb 5

#RGSOGs

A very entertaining evening with some thoroughly decent & impressive old boys at the annual dinner @Cambridge_Uni.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Mar 10

#RGSFieldDay #RGSCCF

@RGSGACTIV Safety brief underway for army cadets training on Bramshott Common.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Mar 7

#RGSAcademic

As part of International Languages Week the boys try their hands - and feet - at Latin American Merengue Dancing.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Jan 5

#RGSAssembly

A fascinating assembly from @PsychDogsUK whose dogs enhance the lives of people with mental illness.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Jan 31

#RGSECA

The Third Form EXAD students refine their cooking skills with noodles al fresco @RGSGACTIV.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Mar 6

#RGSGuildford

Welcome back to the RGS. Hope you had a great weekend. #MondayMotivation.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Mar 10

#RGSFieldDay

@RGSGACTIV Great moves, great rhythm, great style from the boys throwing themselves into African drumming.

