

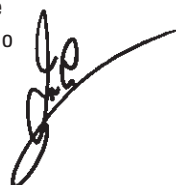


## The Headmaster writes...

Reminders of the School's 500 year history are present throughout the RGS as boys go about their daily routines: the Houses named after benefactors of the School; the Tudor buildings which contain the original teaching rooms; the Latin inscriptions in School Room; the list goes on. In the current climate, however, as educational change and innovation continue to move on apace, it is easy for schools to become obsessed with looking forward rather than reflecting upon the past. The next few years will see significant developments at the RGS with the A Level reforms, the increasing prominence of technology in teaching and learning, and an exciting building programme to provide facilities conducive to education at the highest level. Schools cannot afford the luxury of standing still, rather constant reaction and innovation must be at the very heart of a successful institution.

All of this change, however, is rooted in an institution which has a rich and proud history, and the RGS is acutely aware that change must not come at the expense of a shift in the ethos or core values of the School. The 100th

anniversary of the start of the First World War provided a fitting opportunity to reflect and a poignant reminder of how the past still impacts upon the present. The list of 58 names on the memorial board in Big School provides a sobering reminder of the ultimate sacrifice which Old Guildfordians made and yet for the majority of the community they are just that, a list of names. This year's Remembrance Service breathed life into many of these names as Old Guildfordian Laurie Weeden, who left the School in 1938 and is now in his nineties, reminisced about some of these characters and their similarities to current RGS students: young men with the same passions and interests, the same hopes and aspirations, experiencing many of the same corridors and traditions. This confidence and pride in our past allows the School to have equal confidence and pride in our future and for that we are indebted to all those who sacrificed their lives in the World Wars.





## The Magnificent Seven

The Independent Learning Assignment, completed by all boys in the Lower Sixth Form, again produced submissions of the very highest order as boys impressed with their self-directed, independent research. A final shortlist of seven was drawn up who then had the opportunity to give a presentation to an audience of boys and parents as well as a panel of governors comprising Mr Brian Creese, Dr Lorraine Linton, Professor Shirley Price and Mr Nick Vineall. Subjects ranged from the human lifespan to contemporary US politics to Franco's censorship. Assistant Head and Director of Higher Education **Peter Dunscombe** commented: "The level of scholarship, the passion for their subjects and the engaging presentational skills meant that any one of the finalists would have been a worthy winner." That accolade, however, after long deliberation from the judges, went to **Daniel Sutton** for his outstanding presentation on slavery in the ancient world.



## Personal Reflection

*The Pity of War* proved to be a genuinely personal evening of remembrance and reflection to mark the anniversary of the beginning of World War I. Head of History **Henry Wiggins** provided the spine of the evening with a year-by-year account of the war and its development, interspersed with true stories of family members' survival, poems and extracts from various plays. Director of Music **Peter White** provided two wonderfully arranged and performed songs with the evening finishing with a haunting version of *It's A Long Way to Tipperary*. Other musical performances included **Frederick McGee** playing *Lark Ascending* and **William Pickering** singing

*The Lads in their Hundreds*. The Auditorium was atmospherically transformed by **Karen Price**, a member of the Art Department, with poppies made for each one of the OGs lost in World War I and adorned with dozens of laser-cut Tudor roses. An emotive and thought-provoking evening raised significant sums for *Help for Heroes*.



## A Smoothey Operator



The relaunched annual Smoothey Competition again produced a number of submissions of real imagination and no little technical skill. The competition is named after Ronald Smoothey MBE, a former pupil, who was appointed as an art master in 1946. According to Nigel Watson's *History of the School*, Ronald was a distinctive character, traditionally wearing "sports jackets, slacks and broad, square-knotted ties". He allegedly made no sound on corridors or squeaking staircases "for, as an artist, he could wear thick crêpe-soled shoes without being frowned upon". This spirit of energy, creativity and innovation remains very much alive in the Smoothey Competition as artists continue to express themselves in diverse ways with no theme or media restriction; boys can also enter as many pieces of work as they like. This year's worthy winner, **William Shrubbs**, produced a complex paper sculpture using origami techniques which remained truly loyal to the spirit of flair and enterprise.

## Venetian Blinder

As the winter months descended upon Guildford, audiences enjoyed some escapism as they were transported away from dour December to the sights and sounds of the flourishing Republic of Venice. The production of one of Shakespeare's most iconic plays, *The Merchant of Venice*, highlighted that the underlying message is still as relevant today as it presents an honest, raw insight into humanity. As **Roger Meadowcroft**, the director, noted: "Nobody is without flaw, nobody unredeemable." The talented cast displayed real maturity in conveying the depth and range of characters. **Matthew Sargent** brought great energy and charisma into his depiction of Shylock, while **Dominic Baker** proved to be a convincing Portia as he brought real sensitivity and understanding to the role. **Philip Bowler** portrayed the lead role of Antonio with intensity and emotion; **Henry White** provided an entertaining, comedic element to proceedings. As the appreciative audiences emerged back into reality, Venice was once again a distant dream but a long-lasting memory.



## Walking the Walk



After months of practice strutting around the corridors of the RGS between lessons, the GHS Fashion Show provided the perfect opportunity to showcase publicly this finely-honed swagger. Glitz and glamour were in abundance as the high-energy evening contained dances and walks ranging from Beyoncé to Kate Middleton, from Jess Ennis to Coco Chanel. The boys looked alarmingly confident and comfortable on the catwalk and fully proved that the time spent refining their dance moves had not been in vain. The event proved to be as slick as ever as significant sums of money were raised for the *Alice Ramsay Trust*, a charity established in memory of a former GHS Head Girl who tragically died of a brain tumour. **Matt Baggs**, the Deputy Head of Sixth Form, noted: "The boys showed that there is no end to their talents. It was great to see the boys enjoying themselves so much; they certainly took fashion and dance to another level!"



# Trip Advisor

The range and number of opportunities outside the classroom continue to noteworthy as trips cater to a host of academic, adventurous, cultural and sporting interests. In the last few months a number of unforgettable experiences have seen RGS boys from all year groups visiting all corners of the globe. Since the last edition of *The Register*, there have been languages trips – ancient and modern – to the Rhineland area of Germany, the Catalonian region of Spain and Madrid, and the classical sites of Rome. Academically, the Religion and Philosophy Department visited Morocco, while the History Department toured Berlin. From an extra-curricular perspective, the Big Band performed in Liguria, Northern Italy; in addition, there was the Alpine Mountaineering trip to the French Alps, CCF camps and adventurous training and the Scout trip to Morocco. Staff, including the Headmaster, visited the partnership schools in Nepal. To name but a few!





## Isle be Back

Rarely has the Isle of Wight experienced such a technicolour invasion as the First Form boys, proudly sporting their house colours, descended upon the island complete with colour-co-ordinated sunglasses, tops and face-paint. For once the sun shone with ice-creams and cold drinks taking centre stage rather than the traditional waterproofs and jumpers, as the entire First Form enjoyed three days of bonding, team-building and physical challenges on the annual adventure weekend. A varied and dynamic programme included Abseiling, Aeroball, Dragon Boat Racing, Jacob's Ladder, Ladderlogic, Low Ropes, Wacky Races and Zip Wire all proved as popular, and competitive, as ever; the Headmaster arrived just in time to participate on the Giant Swing which was far more daunting and intimidating than it sounded.

**Debbie Whitehead**, Head of First Form, commented: "The boys impressed throughout the weekend with their camaraderie, their energy and enthusiasm, and their exhilaration as they overcame personal challenges on the various activities. The weekend proved to be an excellent bonding experience."



## A Chinese take-your-breath-away

Any school trip which includes kung fu, acrobats, rickshaw rides and meeting a man who keeps crickets in his armpit must be noteworthy and the China trip did not disappoint as it delivered all of these and more. The boys' fascination with the country was more than matched by the locals' fascination with our boys as Beijing offered a variety of cultural and historic opportunities, including the Summer Palace, Temple of Heaven and the Forbidden City, as well as a walk along the Great Wall. The bullet train then transported the group to the modern city of glass and steel, Shanghai,

where highlights included a psychedelic trip under the Huangpu River, a vertigo-inducing ascent up the iconic Oriental Pearl Tower, a visit to the British Consulate and a trip to the Baosteel factory: a plant of awe-inspiring size, a complex larger than Guildford.

**David Wright**, Head of Economics, commented: "China is steeped in history: an extraordinary, vibrant, relentless country full of potential which will have a profound impact on the lives of many of our students. Hopefully, this trip helped prepare the boys for the global challenges ahead, and inspired them too."



## A Space Odyssey

One of the most extraordinary and ambitious school trips in recent memory saw a group of RGS students making the ultimate sacrifice of leaving behind the rainy 10°C conditions of the UK for the sunny 31°C Florida coastline and NASA's Kennedy Space Center. The trip proved fascinating on many levels: from the simulated weightlessness experience and the re-entry simulator to the more academic lectures on the astro-biological challenges of spaceflight. Other highlights included the rocket building engineering challenge; the Atlantis Exhibition; observing the resting place of the last operational shuttle and riding the Launch Experience; the visit to the famous Apollo moon-landing exhibition and the Saturn V rocket; and the simulated sky diving centre, iFLY. After such

erudite stimulation, Cocoa Beach provided the perfect respite with some surfing and beach-time proving the perfect end to an amazing experience. **Chris Bradford**, the trip organiser, commented: "It is difficult to overestimate the educational significance of this trip. The boys returned galvanised with enthusiasm for the possibilities that the study of Physics offers, and to the dreams it can realise."





# A Degree of Success

The cyclical nature of school life is always very evident each September. Just as the School welcomes the arrival of fresh-faced First and Third Form boys, so our most recent set of leavers head off to start the next stage of their education. For the class of 2014, 25 of them have taken up places at Oxford and Cambridge, a journey that 326 RGS boys have now made in the past decade. Over 95% of degree courses accepted have been at Russell Group universities and, as last year, over 80% were at one of just twelve institutions, with

Bath, Exeter, Cambridge, Durham and Oxford filling the top five places. Boys also continue to choose to study a wide variety of degree courses. As **Peter Dunscombe**, Assistant Head and Director of Higher Education commented: "Economics, Engineering, Natural Sciences and Mathematics are always high on the list of programmes which our boys elect to study but it was also good to see a resurgence in numbers this year for English – with four boys off to Oxford or Cambridge – and Modern Languages."



## Double Standards



Last month's publication of the influential Sunday Times Parent Power guide saw the RGS once again ranked among the very best schools in the country. The only publication that publishes results from all schools, and which combines performance at both GCSE and A Level, the 2014 edition saw the RGS retain its place as the third boys' school in the country and move up one place to fourteenth overall. Two in every five grades achieved at A Level was at A\*, a figure which is more than five times the national average. Among the many whose results stood out – including over 20% of boys with at least three A\* grades – the performance of former School Captain, **Dewi Eburne**, took pride of place. Dewi, who is now studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge, dropped just ten marks out of a possible 2,400 across 24 papers in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics. Results at AS Level from the Lower Sixth were at their highest level for five years with 77% of all entries achieving the top grade while, at GCSE, 64.5% of all entries were awarded the top A\* grade. It was a case of seeing double for two sets of twins: **James** and **Ben Barnwell** both achieved nine A\* and one A grade, a result matched by **Alexander Osborne** whose brother **Daniel** went one better with ten A\* grades, one of 22 boys to achieve a clean sweep.

## Truly Scrum-ptions

RGS rugby has enjoyed a buoyant season as the sport has epitomised the School's philosophy of *sport for all*. On Saturdays, it has not been unusual for over 20 teams to be representing the RGS which has accounted for over a third of the whole school community. Despite a genuinely competitive circuit which includes fixtures against traditionally very strong rugby schools, RGS teams have contributed to a successful season. The 1st XV cup run in the newly-founded *Champions Trophy* proved to be one of the highlights: two impressive away victories at Cranbrook School and Eastbourne College saw the 1st XV pitted against the former Under 15 winners of the NatWest Cup, The Grammar School at Leeds. After a truly incredible performance that will live long in the memory the 1st XV lost out narrowly 24 – 15 in front of a large crowd at Bradstone Brook. Head of Rugby,



**Tom Rogers**, commented: "I am very proud of the commitment and tenacity of all the boys who have taken such pride, shown such camaraderie and demonstrated such passion in putting on an RGS shirt for each fixture. The 1st XV have certainly done their bit to enhance the reputation of rugby at the School and for this they should be congratulated."





## A Crest of a Wave

The School has a rich and proud reputation in many sports; until the arrival of the Barnwells, however, windsurfing was not one of them!

**Ben and James Barnwell**, despite their age, have already participated regularly in national competitions on the world stage. After competing in recent years at the World Championships in Sopot in Poland and Medemblik in the Netherlands, as well as the European Championships in Murcia in Spain, this summer the boys were involved in their third World Championships. Prior to the event, the boys endured a month of solid training on the Isle of Wight in preparation for the

Techno World Championships in Brest in France. After six days of stiff competition, James finished 12th and Ben 15th in an event which was dominated by the French on their home waters, with seven of the top ten finishes being secured by French windsurfers. The Barnwell brothers, however, flew the flag for Great Britain as they proved to be the first and second British finishers in the Techno Plus Class. It was an extraordinary achievement, all the more so considering the brothers only started windsurfing six years ago and are now competing in the senior class.



## Sports Shorts

**Fencing:** **Peter Robinson** was selected to represent Great Britain at the European Under 17 events at Bonn and Copenhagen; this is all the more remarkable as he only started fencing two years ago.

**Hockey:** After making his competitive debut for Surbiton Hockey Club Men's 1st XI in the NOW: Pensions English Hockey League, **Edward Way** represented the Saxon Tigers, while **Matthew Cornwell** represented the Wessex Leopards, in the England Under 18 Futures Cup. Edward was then selected for the England Under 18 training squad.

**Mountain Biking:** **Charles Griffith** took part in the final race of the 2014 PORC Downhill Mountain Biking Series and won the championship in his age group.

**Rowing:** **Oliver Lucas, Matthew Sargent** and **George Wedlake** won bronze at the British Rowing Championships in the Junior 14 coxed quads.

**Sailing:** The RGS team won the Solent Cup at the UK National Independent Schools Sailing Championship.

**Shooting:** The RGS 1st and 2nd Vllls both qualified for the final stage of the prestigious Staniforth Challenge.

**Ski-racing:** The senior team performed impressively at the ESSKI qualifier in Southampton to qualify for the National Championships.

## Check Mates

Chess at the School has continued to enjoy a high profile after the RGS team was ranked third nationally this year and came second in the prestigious Millfield International tournament, beating the National Champions in the process. The School is fortunate to have a significant number of boys of all age groups who have represented England: **Omeet Atara, Kumar Dixit, Harry Grieve, James Golding, Matthew McLachlan** and **Daniel Sutton**. Notable successes this year have included: James becoming Under 14 British Champion; Omeet and James playing in the European Schools Chess Championship; James, Harry and Daniel playing in the Home Nations Championships for their respective age-groups, with James and Daniel remaining unbeaten; and Harry Grieve playing in



the European Youth Chess Championship. Daniel Sutton commented: "Representing your country challenges you not only technically and tactically but also tests your concentration and patience. Games tend to last as long as five or six hours at this level which makes each individual all the more determined not to lose!"





## The Jury's In

This term has continued to see RGS musicians impressing with the diversity of performance: the Market Day concerts, the Big Band Liguria Tour Reunion Concert, the Junior Piano Concert, the Orchestral Concert and the Carol Services among many others. This variety was well illustrated by the performance of *Trial by Jury*. The music of Gilbert and Sullivan may seem to have fallen out of favour in recent years, but the combined Guildford High School and RGS Chamber Choir and Orchestra directed by **Sam Orchard** proved to be a great success. As **Peter White**, Director of Music, commented: "The performance was a timely reminder of just how beguiling the delightful melodies, clever orchestration and witty libretti of these Victorian gems are." Soloists **Samuel Clarke** and **William Pickering** sung with a great sense of style; the choral sections, by turns energetic and affecting, were also delivered with tremendous aplomb. An atmospheric Holy Trinity Church provided the perfect setting as the appreciative audience experienced a real musical treat.



## King of the Choristers



Second Form student and Head Chorister at Guildford Cathedral **Tom King** has been crowned BBC Radio 2's Young Chorister of the Year 2014. Tom was one of two choristers from the diocese to make it through to the final which was broadcast on Radio 2 on Tom's 13th birthday. In the final Tom sang the hymn *Christ Triumphant* and sacred song attributed to JS Bach *If thou art near* and his performances were regarded as "immaculate". As well as his trophy and birthday cake - which was presented to him by the BBC - Tom will receive lessons with

an established singing coach. In addition, he will appear on various programmes on BBC Radio including BBC Radio 2's *Good Morning Sunday* and *The Sunday Hour*, and BBC Radio 4's *Daily Service* and *Sunday Worship*. **Peter White**, Director of Music, commented: "This is a huge achievement for Tom and testament to his dedication and hard work; we are all immensely proud of him. Tom is an extremely talented singer and he has a very exciting future ahead of him."

## And Finally



Two members of staff have recently been publicly acknowledged for their exceptional service. Former Head of Biology and long-serving member of the School's CCF **Ted Badham** was awarded an HM Lord-Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious Service, an honour which affords public recognition to those members of the Reserve and Cadet Forces whose efforts are not recognised by the twice-yearly Honours Lists. For the last 29 years, Ted has given freely of his time to support Contingent activities and generations of cadets have benefitted from his exemplary and loyal service over this period. Member of the Mathematics Department **Shirley Perrett** attended St James's Palace, as a VIP guest, in recognition of her 46 years' association with The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Shirley, who is a Gold Award holder herself, ran the award at her previous school as well as at the RGS for six years. She still plays an enormous role in the School's DofE programme, runs the expedition leader programme for the Sixth Form, is a qualified mountain leader, coordinates the Gold expeditions and can be found leading groups of all award levels at the School.