EREGISTER

The termly newsletter of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford















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THE HEADMASTER WRITES.

This edition of *The Register* provides an illustration of just a few selective highlights of what has been a phenomenally busy first term of the school year. The sheer diversity of achievements and events provides evidence of how academia and the classroom are only one element of a far bigger picture. The importance and value of educating the whole child have never been more acute. The media, on almost a daily basis, report statistics of teenage angst and depression, drop-out rates at secondary and tertiary level, substance abuse: to name but a few of the challenges facing our teenagers in the current climate.

Irrespective of conceptual ability, work ethic and aptitude, there is only one fundamental element which is important to us at the RGS and only one quality which will allow a boy to flourish and fulfil his potential, and that is happiness. We want every boy to relish the opportunities afforded by the RGS and to enjoy the broad spectrum of school life. In an increasingly stressful and pressurised world, however, we have to equip our boys to cope with the social and academic challenges which lie ahead of them. We need to prepare the boys for the tests of life, not a life of tests.

The School's focus on learning habits which permeate every walk of school life is one such way in which we are nurturing a culture of resilience and tenacity, criticality and perspective. In addition, the centrality of our pastoral provision speaks volumes for how highly we regard this aspect of each individual's education. This term has included a succession of visiting speakers – professionals in their sphere – to Parents' Pastoral Evenings, mentor training sessions, assembly and Tutor time. We

want the RGS to provide the firm – and yet flexible – foundations from which boys can not only flourish academically, emotionally, socially and creatively while at the School, but equally importantly at university and in the workplace. If the boys are happy then they stand every chance of fulfilling this ambitious aim. It is, therefore fitting, that this is the ensuring impression of this edition of *The Register*. Despite the range of age-groups, locations, activities, the one constant in these images is smilling boys and this is something truly worthy of celebration.

Storing Toler

IN A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

As this edition of *The Register* showcases, there is so much more to a boy's time here at the School than the pursuit of academic excellence but there is, of course, the small matter of life after the RGS to consider. The RGS has a proud tradition of entry to the top universities for the most prestigious courses. The class of 2015 was no exception and the School was delighted to be the top-ranked school in the influential Sunday Times Parent Power league table of university destinations. Just under a quarter of those 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 that rises to 94% when Bath, a university regularly amongst the top ten ranked institutions, is added to the list. In reflecting on the reasons for this success Peter Dunscombe, Assistant Head and Director of Higher Education, drew particular attention to the all-round strengths of our leavers. He commented: "While boys had to obtain strong grades to achieve their places, it was their breadth of interest in their subjects beyond the curriculum, their tenacity 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 grades, that will set RGS boys up for a successful future."





SUPER POWER

For those in the Fifth and Sixth Form, the middle of August is a time of mixed feelings. On the one hand there is the knowledge that there are still several weeks of holiday, relaxation and sunshine before it is time to return to education; the only figurative cloud on the horizon is the nervous wait for examination results. Whatever concerns there may have been quickly evaporated as, at both GCSE and A Level, the boys once again achieved outstanding success on both a personal and collective basis. At A Level, the final figure of 42.3% of all grades at A* matched the previous best set back in 2011 with 30 boys achieving 3 or more A* grades. Pride of place went to Shyam Tailor, who is now studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge, and who dropped just ten marks out of a possible 2,400 across 24 papers in Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics. The Lower Sixth also served notice of their potential with 90% of all grades at A or B. It was, however, the Fifth Form who stole the headlines achieving 73.6% of all results at A*, a new record for the School. A staggering 100 boys passed every paper at A* or A with 40 boys, 29% of the year, managing to gain an A* in every subject.

SCHOOL REPORT

CREST Awards: Thirteen Upper Sixth Form boys were 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. Michael Collis won the Mayor of Guildford Award, work experience in a research environment. As a result of Daniel Couldery's work – Deformation and Failure of Lego Bricks – he was invited to be one of the three judges for the West Surrey Materials Society's Annual Three-Minute Thesis Competition.

Economics: Henry Xuan's essay entitled The rising gap between rich and poor is not just bad for society, it is bad for growth has been one of only 20 shortlisted by the Royal Economic Society for their annual Young Economist Competition prize, from a record entry in excess of 2,100 essays.

Film Award: James Miller has had his documentary about badgers in Blackheath shortlisted for a national film-making challenge. The competition aimed to find young presenters who were passionate about nature and could inspire others. James focused on the badgers' physical and behavioural adaptations to ensure survival in their environment and the distinct characters of the animals.

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.

Model United Nations: At the Christ's Hospital MUN, RGS boys won five Highly Commended Delegate Awards and the coveted Best School Award. Alex Denny then won Outstanding Delegate Award at the London Oratory School MUN Conference.

ALL BAR NONE

In search of calamari, Catalonia and concerts – in no particular order — the joint schools music tour saw RGS and Guildford High School students heading out to Barcelona. With temperatures regularly topping 35 degrees, transporting heavy instruments like the timpani which do not take kindly to being wheeled on cobbles while donning concert dress of black trousers and shirt, made the challenge all the more demanding! It all seemed a long way from Holy Trinity Church on Guildford High Street. The choir and orchestra performed in a host of inspiring, unique settings including the Church of Santa Maria del Mar, the Church of La Concepció, the Church of Sant Salvador and the atmospheric Montserrat Monastery, which boasts an impressive basilica surrounded by stunning panoramic views of Catalonia and is accessible only via a pre-war cable car which did little to instil much confidence. Gaudí´s emblematic temple Basílica de la Sagrada Família

and the gothic cathedral in Barcelona provided two more extraordinary performance venues, as the tourists impressed audiences with music of quite extraordinary quality, maturity and refinement. As well as the concerts, the group had the opportunity to refine their water-based skills on pedalos, sample a succession of beaches and swimming pools and enjoy many once-in-a-lifetime experiences.





CRYSTAL CLEAR



The seventh annual Independent Learning Assignment Presentation Evening impressed and bewildered in equal measure as the boys delivered presentations with an extraordinary level of sophistication and complexity. In front of an appreciative audience of boys, parents and staff, the finalists - Duncan Ashworth, Michael Collis, Callum Holmes, Hans Hu, George Mason, Aran Macfarlane, Daniel Osborne, Mark Thornton and James Whipman - presented to a panel of governors comprising Brian Creese, Chris Critchlow, Lorraine Linton, Shirley Price and Nick Vineall. Subjects ranged from the French Revolution to the origin of life, from criminal punishment to flexible electronics and genetic engineering. 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 Callum Holmes for his outstanding presentation and forensic investigation - partly based on his time at a research laboratory at the University of Reading - into the world of Group 11 cyanide crystals.

ENTERPRISING CHARACTERS

As the ever-popular series of *The Apprentice* continues to capture the public's imagination, so the budding entrepreneurs of the RGS have been proving that in fact intelligence and common sense can walk hand in hand. Established in 1962, *Young Enterprise* is the UK's largest business and enterprise education charity which aims to empower young people to harness their personal and business skills. Utilising volunteer Business Advisers, who are also RGS parents, to lead and share their own expertise, the RGS teams have been fortunate to benefit from a wealth of experience. Two of our four Young Enterprise businesses, *Mercury* and *Opprimé*, entered the first of the Young Enterprise

competitions this year, held at the Guildhall in Guildford. The competition took the form of a Dragons' Den and they competed against sixteen other businesses as they brought to the table their Surrey cookbook with recipes from around the world and the Peteca, a hand shuttlecock. As Laura Griffiths, Head of RGS Young Enterprise, commented: "Both businesses presented a clear business strategy with confidence, detail and passion, responding well to the tough questioning from the Dragons." Team *Mercury* gave a formidable presentation and rightly took first place and a cash injection of £100 for their business for their exciting, innovative product, the Peteca.



THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD

The whole community joined together in an act of remembrance as the School united in memory of those who have lost their lives in warfare since the First World War. The service was particularly poignant as the RGS welcomed a number of eminent and decorated Old Guildfordians to attend the service. Our oldest School Captain, John Downham (OG 1943) laid the wreath on behalf of the Old Guildfordians while the current School Captain, Duncan Ashworth, lay the wreath for the staff and boys of the School. Two addresses then provided an insight into the act of remembrance from different perspectives. Old Guildfordian Sir John Allison, who left the School in 1961, provided a very personal recollection of war through an anecdote involving his father fighting for control of Hill 60 on the front line in Belgium just south of Ypres. This was followed by an address by Upper Sixth Form student Angus Higgins on behalf of the School. A moving and very personal service of remembrance proved thought-provoking and emotive for boys, staff and Old Guildfordians alike.





DRAWING INSPIRATION

On the back of the captivating exhibition in Big School last year, the RGS *Illustroetry* team was delighted to be invited to attend the prestigious international *Art, Language, Location* festival at Cambridge. The festival featured over 70 innovative and experimental contemporary artists, from this country and from further afield, who use text in their work. *Illustroetry*, now

in its third year, is a collaborative project with the aim of exploring the relationship between written and visual means of expression. As well as showing some past work, the exhibition gave the opportunity to explore the theme of Home, linking the three aspects of *Art, Language, Location*. Local schools were invited to bring work to contribute and there was also a range

of equipment available so that members of the public could also add to the installation, either responding to poems or pictures, or producing their own. A really positive energy was conducive to the production of some fantastic creativity and by the end of the day the entire wall of the exhibition room was laden with diverse and imaginative work.





SMOOTHEY MOVIE

The annual Smoothey Art Competition produced a wide range of submissions from students throughout the School. The spirit of Ronald Smoothey MBE, a former pupil and art master from the 1940s, remains very much alive in this competition as the energy, creativity and innovation - and, indeed, eccentricity - which epitomised Ronald provides the inspiration for students to express themselves with imagination and no little technical skill and with no theme or media restriction. Among the entries shortlisted for the prize were a lively landscape with boats, wire "beasties", evocative photographs, birds in watercolour, model food, origami, a mosaic image, a pointillist landscape and some printmaking. The eventual winner was Alexander Freeney who produced an astonishingly assured and complex Super Mario World Hama Bead animation which was imaginative, carefully crafted and remained truly loyal to the spirit of flair and enterprise of Ronald Smoothey.



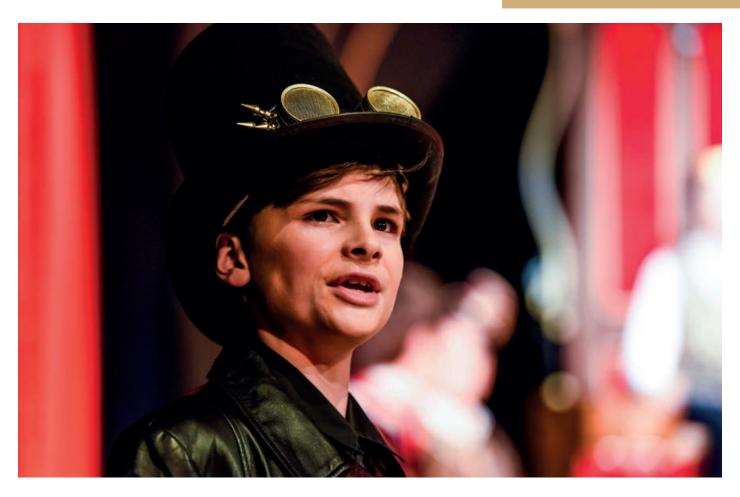












SERIOUSLY WICKED

With Black Friday deals fresh in the mind, the RGS provided the ultimate pre-Christmas offer as audiences were treated to two Shakespeare plays for the price of one. The ambitious double-bill junior production of *Something* Wicked saw over 50 boys involved both on stage and backstage, many in an RGS production for the first time. A talented young cast captured perfectly the spirit of Richard III: the power struggle, the deception and the betrayal. Among many impressive performances, Dominic Baker was effortless as he played Richard with maturity, conveying the intelligent, manipulative character with conviction. The disquieting and ominous music – which was created specifically for the plays by Samuel Cherry – as well as the excellent costumes, atmospheric lighting and staging all created a suitably dark, sinister mood. This atmosphere then segued smoothly into Macbeth and the destruction wrought when ambition is unchecked by moral constraints. Philip Bowler conveyed sympathetically Banquo while Jack Gamble powerfully portrayed the complexity and ambition of Macbeth himself. The sustained applause at the end of each performance was richly deserved for a large cast of young actors who had shown astonishing depth and range, and proved themselves to be the real deal.







THE WIGHT STUFF

Anxious, nervous and tearful, the departure from Guildford for the annual RGS invasion of the Isle of Wight is traditionally an emotional scene. Fortunately, the boys were on hand to provide comfort and reassurance to their parents and avoid them indulging too excessively in their melancholy! The trip is now a well-oiled routine and the logistics of transporting 102 First Form boys, 4 prefects and 9 staff were seamless as always. The sun shone as the entire First Form enjoyed three days of bonding, team-building and physical challenges on the annual adventure weekend. After some successful crab hunting and games on the beach, a varied and dynamic programme included Abseiling, Aeroball, Dragon Boat Racing, Jacob's Ladder, Ladderlogic, Low Ropes, Wacky Races and Zip Wire all were as popular, and competitive, as ever; the Giant Swing continued to prove far more daunting and intimidating than it sounded. Debbie Whitehead, Head of First Form, commented: "The camaraderie of the boys, their willingness to throw themselves into new challenges and their exhilaration were plain to see. The weekend nurtured a strong yeargroup spirit: at no time was this more obvious than when the boys were belting out the National Anthem prior to the England against Wales match in the Rugby World Cup!"





OCEANS 17

17 boys from the Combined Cadet Force flew to the volcanic island of Montserrat in the Caribbean for a twelve-day adventurous training and cultural expedition. Having achieved the internationally recognised PADI Open Water diving qualification prior to departure, the boys went on to complete their Advanced Open Water qualification. With these qualifications and with the setting of stunningly clear Caribbean ocean – a far cry from the slightly less lush surroundings of British lakes – the boys relished the opportunities. From green turtles to moray eels, from stingrays to angelfish, the diving was exhilarating and beautiful in equal measure. The itinerary also included land-based conservation work during an overnight jungle trek. The boys had a meeting with the His Excellency The Governor of Montserrat and visited the National Volcano Observatory, providing an insight into the science behind ensuring that the people have peace of mind as the island's active volcano is meticulously monitored around the clock. An exploration through houses within the recently opened exclusion zone was a unique chance to visit an area which had been untouched and where no-one has stepped foot since the eruption twenty years previously. The CCF would like to thank the CCFA, Ulysses Trust and Berlin Infantry Bde Military Trust Fund for their financial support.



REAPING THE BENEFITS

After two years of fundraising and preparation, 24 boys headed off to Cambodia for an extraordinary cultural, emotional and educational four-week expedition. After the acclimatisation phase in Phnom Penh which provided historical context to the present day with visits to the Killing Fields and the S21 Prison, the boys then travelled to Siem Reap, the aesthetically and architecturally stunning home of the Angkor Wat temple complex. The boys then moved on to the RGS Partnership School at Tien Kram, Ratanakiri province in the northern reaches of Cambodia, and also to Kmaeng School where the boys were actively involved in teaching the children. At the end of each day, the children would stay for several hours, playing games and interacting with the RGS boys, as Joshua Bell noted: "Their desire to learn was simply staggering and made all of us realise how fortunate we are back at home." The boys then enjoyed a four-day jungle phase and time at the beach town of Sihanoukville before returning to Phnom Penh. James Witts, the organiser of the expedition, commented: "In a country where child literacy, mortality and trafficking remain serious concerns, the RGS boys showed care, compassion, energy and pride as they made a real impression on their classes during their short visit."







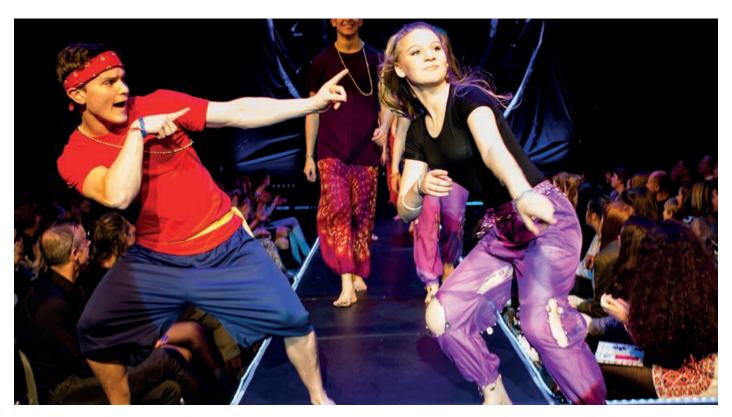


CINDERFELLAS

With the Lower Sixth boys suddenly starting to strut down the corridors and in the lunch queue, it can only mean one thing — it is time for the annual GHS Fashion Show. This year's theme was Fairy Tales which took the audience on a trip down memory lane and a journey through their most treasured childhood stories while the latest

trends seen in fashion industry were elegantly modelled on the catwalk of Guildford. From Aladdin to Pinocchio to Snow White to Little Red Riding Hood, the boys looked comfortable and surprisingly at ease as they modelled an array of clothing far removed from the RGS rugby kit. The evening finished with prom dresses and dinner

jackets being fashioned in the Cinderella Walk to the aptly chosen music of M83's Midnight City. As professional and as slick as ever, this event raised significant sums of money for the Alice Ramsay Trust, a charity established in memory of a former GHS Head Girl who tragically died of a brain tumour.





CAPE CRUSADERS

Although sport was the central focus, game drives, cheetah sanctuaries, waterparks, climbing Table Mountain and visiting Robben Island ensured that for those who travelled to South Africa, this was no ordinary sports tour. The itinerary had at its heart training and playing on some exquisite surfaces in picturesque settings against quality opponents for whom precision, strength and pace were at the heart of their game; however, the trip provided real cultural diversity as the boys experienced this beautiful country at first hand. The 62 hockey and rugby boys spent the first few days acclimatising on safari in the Pilanesberg

Game Reserve before playing eight rugby and twelve hockey matches against sides from Johannesburg, Stellenbosch and Cape Town. The boys experienced ferocious opposition and performed extremely well in testing and sometimes intimidating environments, as well as having to deal with the challenges of altitude and well-drilled, talented opposition. Other highlights included watching two prides of lions and their cubs, excursions to see the penguins and whales of the Southern Cape and the overwhelmingly generous welcome of the South African hosts.











SURREY PRIDE

The lush, green pitches of Bradstone Brook provided the perfect platform for a rugby season where the levels of participation, camaraderie and team spirit grabbed the headlines rather than the weather and cancellations. In a year when expectation, hype and ultimate disappointment surrounded the England rugby side, RGS teams rarely let down the parents and spectators who turned out on the touch-line in all conditions. The sport for all philosophy was a reality on several occasions as the School fielded all 21 teams on a Saturday, including on one occasion the RGS's first ever Under 15E fixture. The 1st XV, led admirably by Joseph Flanagan and Harry Kettle, produced a number of good performances, notably in a 45 - 3 victory against Eltham College and a 27 – 12 win against Judd School. The Under 15C team remained unbeaten throughout the season with a series of fantastic performances, while the Under 13A team won, for the third consecutive year, the Highfield 10's Tournament. Tom Rogers, Head of Rugby, noted: "In what is an increasingly competitive circuit against some of the strongest rugby-playing schools in the country, the pride that boys take in pulling on the RGS rugby shirt is remarkable. The culture of mutual support, respect and encouragement, right from our very youngest teams, is inspiring and I am genuinely grateful to all the boys – and their coaches – who have contributed to such a successful season. I would also like to thank all the parents for their phenomenal support throughout the season, the presence of so many supporters on the touch-line made each game feel like a true team effort."

ON THE PACE

Following fast in the footsteps of some of the extremely talented runners who have recently left the School, a new generation of athletes is ensuring that RGS's reputation for cross-country success continues. A combined First and Second Form team competed in the Junior Knole Run at Sevenoaks. With nearly 40 schools taking part in the 3.4 kilometre race which takes competitors through a mixture of hill and flat, grass and woodland, the RGS A team took third place in this prestigious event. From over 300 runners, the individual winner was Sam Martin with a winning time of 14.35 which was a brilliant achievement in such a quality field. 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, with Charlie Kershaw winning the event, and thereby qualifying for the National Finals. Dai Cowx, master in charge of cross-country, commented: "The RGS is extremely fortunate that its close proximity to the Surrey Hills provides such a picturesque and diverse training area for the School's athletes. The RGS enjoys a rich tradition in cross-country and I have every confidence that the current group of junior and middle school boys have an exciting future ahead of them."



A QUESTION OF SPORT

Combining the sharp wit of Graham Norton, the sporting expertise of John Inverdale, the gravitas and experience of Sir Terry Wogan, and the flamboyant exuberance of Alan Carr, the RGS's very own aficionado, Director of Sport Ian Wilkes, proved to be a force to be reckoned with for the first King's Lecture of the academic year. With the Auditorium transformed into a plush chat show venue complete with leather Chesterfield sofas, the School was delighted to welcome back a panel of four Old Guildfordians - Jack Clifford, Angus Groom, Jonny Hay and Mark Lambert who have achieved, and continue to achieve, national and international recognition in athletics, rowing and rugby. The sportsmen shared their schoolboy memories which ranged from the inspiration of beating Mr Wilkes in cross-country to using the disappointment and frustration of being a B team rugby player as a spring-board to a career in the game. The panel also provided insight into the harsh realities of training, coping with injury and setback, nutrition, and the need to plan for the future. Despite the extraordinary array of talent on show the over-riding sense was one of humility and decency. The importance of the support of family was rightly stressed as was the fact that enjoyment must always underpin success. As Mark commented: "Rugby is pretty

much the same now as it always was when I was representing the RGS at Bradstone Brook, surrounded by my mates and enjoying myself: it just hurts a lot more and takes longer to recover!"

The final word went to Jonny who perhaps encapsulated the evening as he advised the audience: "Follow your dream and just see where it takes you."



SPORTS SHORTS

Badminton: In the Surrey County
Badminton Association tournament
Christopher Chong won gold at Under 13A
and silver at Under 15A while his brother
Jonathan Chong won gold at Under 17B.
Sam Baker won the Surrey Under 13
closed badminton mixed doubles.

Basketball: Findlay Laffan has been playing basketball regularly with Guildford Goldhawks which has led to selection for both the Surrey and South East England Regional squads.

Chess: Amardip Ahluwalia represented England against Greece in the Under 13 category and was selected for the World Youth Championships.

Fencing: Leo Kamstra won gold in the Under 11 age-group of the Cocks Moor Épée Championship. Hockey: Edward Way represented the England Under 21 squad against Germany and was selected to join their Development Programme with the potential to represent England and/or Great Britain at junior international level.

Ice Hockey: William Lawson attended the England National Ice Hockey Training Camp and has subsequently been selected for the England Ice Hockey Under 14 Squad for 2015/2016.

Judo: Oliver Platt has been selected to compete in the England Judo team in the 2015 Sainsbury's School Games, competing against the other home nations and a team from Brazil.

Sailing: Ben Mueller has earned a place in the 2015/2016 Optimist Intermediate Squad: the training squad below the National Squad, which is a main source of future Team GB sailors.

Skiing: Charlie Aldridge-Bate and Toby Fitzsimmons are currently members of the English Schools Ski Squad.

Ski-racing: The RGS ski-race team, comprising Alexander Acomb, Charlie Aldridge-Bate, Toby Fitzsimmons and Marcus Hinton, was invited to take part in the English Schools dry slope selection and has now progressed to represent England in the British finals.

Weightlifting: Christopher Murray participated in the Under 20 British Weightlifting Championships in Wembley, winning his weight category and breaking five British records in the process. Christopher then lifted in the 62kg category at the 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games in Samoa and won bronze.

AND FINALLY ...



#RGSImages

The Upper Sixth Form boys prepare for this morning's photograph on the Front Lawn.





#RGSOpenDay

They're afraid. Very afraid. Exploding Jelly Babies this Saturday in the Chemistry labs.





#RGSRugby

Matches now underway at a rain-drenched Bradstone Brook. #bestofbritish #thejoyofparenting





#RGSECA

CCF cadets experience drill for the first time during this afternoon's Monday Period 8 activities.





#RGSImages

A chilly November morning with the Old Building and Headmaster's Lawn covered in frost.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford Oct 21

#RGSTrips

The lighter way to enjoy school trips. #maltesers







#RGSCharity

Just under 1,000 doughnuts bought in just 8 minutes: the things boys do for charity! @macmillancancer





#RGSArchive

Cartoon by a Lower Sixth Form boy in the school magazine. The Guildfordian, from 1982.





#RGSGuildford

Congratulations to @HolroydHowe on the award of Education Caterer of the Year: fully & richly deserved.

