

# The Register



Issue 15 Trinity 2014

The newsletter of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford



## The Headmaster writes...

This academic year has proved to be the year of the inspection and after the successful ISI Inspection in the Michaelmas Term, it was the turn of the RGS Combined Cadet Force (CCF) to undergo their biennial inspection. The School was delighted to welcome Lieutenant Colonel Will Tonkins on Field Day 5 who conducted this on behalf of the Ministry of Defence.

The very fact that the School suspends teaching on five days throughout the school year for Field Days underlines the value which the RGS places on learning and development outside the classroom. The opportunity to have weekend and overnight experiences means that these activities have genuine value and challenge. The Field Days provide trips on water, on land and in the air and the current numbers in the optional CCF, Explorer Scouts, Hiking, Lifesaving, Mountain Biking, Mountaineering and Outdoor Pursuits are

testament to the popularity and diversity of these options.

The report by the Reviewing Officer served to articulate the rationale behind these activities and why the RGS feels that they are so integral to each boy's development. The report states: "It was obvious that they [the boys] had responded positively to the challenges which promoted: responsibility, loyalty, courage (both physical and mental), determination, integrity and selfless commitment." The report also acknowledged the central role played by "highly motivated and dedicated staff" who "understood how to inspire their cadets and... were also passionate about what they did".







## Drawing Inspiration

Over the last twelve months, boys and staff have been working on the *Illustr poetry* / *Poetry* project, bringing together budding artists and poets from the School to produce some stunning collaborative works. Under the guidance of **Karen Price** and **Phil Leamon** from the Art and English Departments respectively, the boys produced truly diverse illustrations which revealed real maturity and insight into the poetry. As part of RGS Arts Festival, the launch of the first *Illustr poetry* publication was celebrated with an exhibition of the work and a recital of some of the poems. In Big School, the guests were treated to a beautiful, free-hanging exhibition that rotated slowly on wires to reveal the art on one side and the poems on the other. **Phil Leamon** commented: "Boys and staff read their poems fantastically well, reminding us that poems need to be read out loud to truly bring the language to life; they also talked with passion and intelligence about their artwork."

## Having a Ball

As traditional and quintessentially English as Ascot, Henley and Wimbledon and with a strict dress code to match, the who's who of RGS donned black tie for the event of the summer. With the new and old buildings of the School having received their annual radical and impressive make-over, the RGS was once again ready to host the Leavers' Ball as the opportunity was taken to formally thank the boys and the parents, many of whom were coming to the end of a seven-year, or longer, association with the School. After the Leavers' Ceremony in Holy Trinity Church, the boys were joined by their guests for a drinks reception which signaled the start to the Ball. With the Great

Hall transformed into a casino, the Auditorium a dance floor and the Headmaster's Lawn a sophisticated drinks reception, guests enjoyed an evening where reminiscing gave way to dancing and which provided the perfect send-off to the Upper Sixth Form boys.



## The Blair Enrich Project

The RGS was delighted to welcome Nirmal Soti, the Headmaster of BhuPu school, and Hom Rawal, a senior English teacher at Janabikas, who spent a week at the School. In 2010, the RGS began its international partnership with two schools in Besisahar, Nepal and has continued to develop strong links between the staff and pupils with visits and joint projects. Currently the First to Fourth Form boys are completing joint projects with the pupils in Nepal to learn more about daily life. Nirmal and Hom spent the week observing lessons, talking to staff and boys, and teaching Nepalese to the Second Form. **Sophie Blair**, the International Links Co-ordinator, commented: "The aim of the visit was to focus on teaching and learning methods so that the schools can experience different approaches and techniques. It is a mutually beneficial relationship and the RGS boys continue to enjoy the opportunities provided by the partnership."





# Model Ambassadors

RGS boys attended the most prestigious Model United Nations (MUN) Conference of the year at Haileybury School, with delegations travelling from all over the world to attend. The boys made an impression, both playing key roles in the conference and receiving awards for their performances. Based upon his involvement at other MUN conferences, **Angus Hammond** was given the high-profile role of chairing the Human Rights Committee. The Chad delegation won a Distinguished

Delegation Award under the guidance of ambassador **Sebastian Mansley**. In addition, **Hywel Finden-Browne**, **Pascal Le Tendre-Hanns** and **Jonathan Gonsalves Martin** all received Highly Commended Awards and **George Chantry** received a Distinguished Award. **Emma Cuthbertson**, the advisor to the RGS boys, commented: "These were all fantastic accomplishments considering the standard of competition; the RGS continues to establish an enviable reputation in MUN and the boys deserve great credit."



# Flights of Fancy



The diversity and number of opportunities outside the classroom remain a key feature of the RGS education as boys have the chance to broaden their horizons in a range of academic, cultural, extra-curricular, and sporting trips. Also notable is the fact that these trips involve all year groups from the First Form right up to the Upper Sixth Form. In the last three months, trips overseas have included: the senior Classics trip to Greece visiting sites in Athens, Corinth, Delphi, Mycenae and Olympia; the Upper Sixth Form Geography field trip to Tenerife where the boys focused on ecosystems, sustainable management, the pattern of volcanic debris and the provision of water resources; the homestay French trip to Biarritz for the Third and Fourth Forms where the boys immersed themselves in the language and culture of the country; and the Spanish residential trip to Barcelona and Calella for the First and Second Forms which included visits to the FC Barcelona Nou Camp Stadium, to the Dali museum and to Waterworld.



# Making a Point



The Sixth Form debating team, comprising **Timothy Foster**, **Angus Hammond**, **Oliver Northover Smith** and **Daniel Sutton**, has been grabbing the headlines as they have made a significant impact upon this year's *The Institute of Ideas Debating Matters* competition. After being crowned winners in the Regional Final where topics included lads' magazines, renewable energy in the developing world and funding for the arts, the RGS progressed to the National Finals: the top 12 teams from an initial entry of 190. In the inspiring setting of the British Library, the RGS again impressed and after winning two debates were unlucky to lose in the semi-finals as they debated the issue of humanitarian intervention. **Harriet Suenson-Taylor**, who along with **Karen Price** mentored the boys, commented: "To finish joint third in the country in this high-profile, national event is testament to the boys who were articulate, persuasive and assured throughout the competition. I was delighted that Daniel followed on from his award of best overall debater at the regionals to win third best debater overall in the national competition."

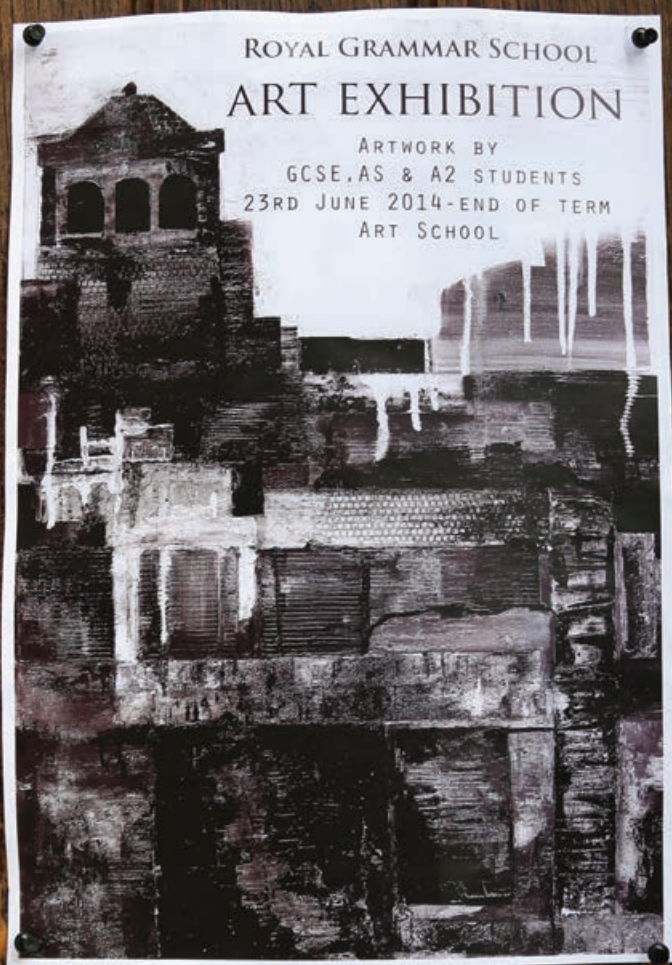


# A Fine Impression

A beautiful summer's evening provided an idyllic backdrop to an event where canapés and Champagne offered the perfect accompaniment to a stroll through the Art School. The Private View of the Art Exhibition once again provided the opportunity to showcase work of extraordinary quality to an appreciative audience of boys, staff, governors, parents and guests including the Mayor of Guildford. The exhibition displayed some of the finest pieces of the GCSE, AS and A Level students, many of whom were on hand to provide context and insight into their work. To pick out any highlights from so many exceptional pieces would be invidious, however, particularly noteworthy were: *Broken Bottles* by **Sebastian Chaumeton**; *Ziggurat* by **James Delaney**; *Guildford* by **Daniel Innes**; *Ennui Partout* by **Jason Roy**; *Intimations of Mortality* by **Edward Way**; and *Cubist Memento Mori* by **James Whipman**.









## Hitting the Sweet Spot

Fifth Form student, **Alexander Sweet**, was presented with a plaque on the pitch at Lord's during the England Test Match against Sri Lanka by the president of the MCC, Mike Gatting, to commemorate an outstanding batting performance. In the annual fixture for the RGS 1st XI against the MCC, Alexander enjoyed a memorable debut for the School's senior team at the age of just 14 years. As the MCC annual report outlined: "[He] started well, accumulating runs steadily up to the tea interval. As the ball became harder to hold, Sweet was able to attack and punish the MCC bowling, and 115 runs later he had taken the team to the brink of a six-wicket victory." Alexander has continued to impress with both bat and ball as he has established himself as a key part of the 1st XI and he achieved



the first century of the term for a school team in the 1st XI's victory over Trinity School, Croydon.



## It's a Breeze

The lack of vast expanses of water on site in a town-centre school does not seem to provide any obstacle to the RGS sailors as they continue to build a formidable reputation. This term has seen the boys competing in a number of competitions including: the RS Feva Schools Championship; the Itchenor Schools Week where **Patrick Croghan** and **James Dickinson** finished an impressive sixth overall and third nationally; four BSDRA regional team racing events; and the Papercourt Sailing Club invitational team-racing event. The main highlight of the term was the RGS team comprising **Patrick Croghan**, **Hywel Finden-Brown**, **Joshua Voller** and **Etienne Westphal** winning the final of the Papercourt Team Racing Regatta. After losing the first race, the team won five consecutive races to finish in first place overall, and then won a 'best of three' final to claim the overall prize. On an individual level, at the Youth Nationals, **Thomas Goodbourn** finished sixth to secure an invitational place to the European Series in Kiel, Germany and **Patrick Croghan** came second out of 150 competitors in the Topper National Series 2 event at Queen Mary.



## A Master Stroke

RGS rowers have continued to impress in high-profile events recently. Following their selection to represent the Thames London Rowing Region, **Oliver Lucas**, **Matthew Sargent** and **George Wedlake** won gold medals at the British Rowing Junior Inter-Regional Regatta in a Junior 14 coxed quad at Nottingham, competing against eleven other rowing regions. Even more impressive was the fact that they established a seven-second lead over the silver medalists. The same boys then achieved bronze medals in the Junior 14 coxed quads at the National Schools Championships in May. This was a significant achievement as competition was particularly fierce with 26 boats in their category; the boys only narrowly missed the silver position by just 0.44 of a second.



# Field of Dreams

An explosion of colour, balloons and bespoke sunglasses greeted the athletes on a perfect summer's day as the Guildford Spectrum once again provided the setting for Sports Day. The pinnacle of all house competitions, the boys competed and cheered as energetically and enthusiastically as ever. Sports Day is always one of the most fiercely contested events as, spurred on by massed ranks of supporters, the boys strive to gain points for their Houses as the Cock House Cup, the inter-House competition, draws to its conclusion. On the track and field, there were some outstanding performances. Notable individual performances included the current school record holder, **George Gathercole**, winning the 1,500 metres and **Alexander Cockwill** comfortably winning the 400 metres; in the tug-of-war, the heavy-weights of Beckingham



displayed their brawn as well as their brains as they emerged victorious. Under the effervescent leadership of Housemaster **Dai Cowx**, Powell pipped Beckingham to the post and thereby won the shield for an extraordinary eleventh time in succession. The shield was presented to the victorious House Captain of Powell, **Harry Ferguson**, by the Mayor of Guildford.



# You Can't be Serious

The fact that the hockey season stretched out into the Trinity Term was evidence of the success of RGS hockey. In the final qualification match for the National Finals, the Under 16 team travelled to Culford School, Suffolk. In a tense game, the RGS emerged 4 – 1 winners with all four goals from **Edward Way**. It was, however, an impressive team performance and the fact that goalkeeper, **Henry Xuan** was man of the match, underlined how tense and competitive an occasion it was. For the second time in four years – a considerable achievement in itself – the



Under 16s tested themselves against the eight finest school teams at the National Hockey Finals in Cannock. The boys performed impressively and, despite not reaching the final stages, played some outstanding hockey, the highlight of which was the spirited 2 – 1 win over The King's School, Chester. **Edward Way** was at the heart of much of the play, creating a number of chances and scoring three goals throughout the tournament.



# Sports Shorts

**Chess:** The 1st team won 4 – 2 against Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School to progress to the National Finals at Uppingham School.

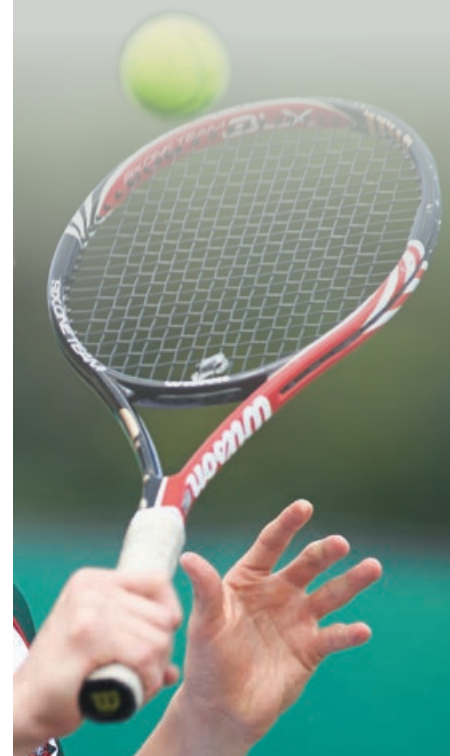
**Fencing:** At the British Youth Fencing Championship, in the Under 16s **Peter Robinson** finished in 24th place and in the Under 18s **Sebastian Morton** finished 11th.

**Kayaking:** **Edmund Haws** was in action for Great Britain in a quartet, all from Wey Kayak Club, which travelled to Slovakia to take part in the Piestany International Regatta and featured 310 athletes from 18 nations. Team GB won 22 medals with Edmund winning gold in the junior men's K4 1000m and silver in the K2 1000m.

**Rugby:** After his success for the Surrey Under 15 team which won the South of England 10s competition, **Henry Paremain** was selected to play for Harlequins in an academy tournament. In addition, **Charles Hubbard** has been selected in the Surrey Under 13 Rugby Development Squad.

**Swimming:** **Alexander Shackleton** came fourth in the 200 metre breaststroke county final in a time which qualifies for the regional competition at the Olympic Aquatics Centre.

**Tennis:** The RGS competed at the prestigious Surrey Schools Tennis Festival, held annually at St George's College, Weybridge. **Benjamin Baker** and **Marcus Solarz Hendriks** particularly impressed winning four consecutive matches in the Under 19 Open competition and finishing runners-up, despite only being in the Lower Sixth Form.





# Play Right



Under the guidance and inspiration of Head of Drama **Nancy McClean** and from over 400 entries nationally and internationally, RGS boys secured the top two positions in the prestigious *New Views* playwriting competition run by the National Theatre. Having also benefited from a workshop and mentoring session with playwright Deborah Bruce, Sixth Form student **William Pinhey** won with his script *Is there Wifi in Heaven?* while **Cameron Finlay** was a worthy runner-up with his play *Something Wicked*. As part of the prize, both the boys' 30-minute plays were staged at the National Theatre with a professional cast. In his play, Will explored friendship, mortality and the contrast between what we admit to ourselves and what we dare to admit to other people. Will, who is himself a talented actor and has performed in many school productions, commented: "The New Views competition marks my first venture into playwriting, and the sheer wonder at seeing my play come to life at the hands of professionals has certainly given me a taste for it."



# Instrumental Success

As well as the regular musical events such as the popular Market Day Concerts, in a new initiative, the RGS staged its first Concerto Concert which featured seven boys playing concerto movements accompanied by *The Southern Pro Musica*, Guildford Borough's resident professional orchestra. **Edward Ball** (double bass), **Samuel Clarke** (flute), **Michael Lan** ('cello), **Frederick McGee** (violin), **Oliver Shorthose** (trumpet), **Nicholas Warren** (horn) and **Oliver White** (harp) all gave remarkably assured and musical performances reflecting the astonishing depth and technical ability of RGS instrumentalists. The RGS Arts Festival then provided the opportunity for a range of events. The Charity Bands concert featuring Concert Band and the RGS/GHS Tour Band raised an astonishing £850 for a local homeless hostel. **Sam Orchard**, Assistant Director of Music,



then conducted the Chamber Orchestra in a highly successful Handel Concert which featured both the Fireworks and Water Music. A huge number of young players performed in the combined orchestra of RGS/Lanesborough and St Thomas's Primary School which brought together our junior instrumentalists with players from the String Schemes.

# And Finally



**Andrew Kneen** (OG 1950) made a presentation to the Headmaster, **Dr Jon Cox**, during an Old Guildfordian lunch where old boys shared their recollections of wartime as part of an oral history project being put together for this year's First World War and D-Day commemorations. Andrew's painting reflects his memories of the School seventy years ago. The heart of the painting depicts in the courtyard the headmaster, the senior master and the caretaker, surrounded by four lessons: Geography, Mathematics, English and Latin. The painting captures the range of staff characters – everything from the cantankerous to the pompous to the awe-inspiring – as well as the schoolboy emotions in the classroom, the anarchic energy in the playground and the journey of cycling away from school as he looks forward to the rest of his life. The Latin quotation at the bottom of the painting is, to this day, on the wall in School Room: *haec olim meminisse juvabit* roughly translated as "It will be pleasant in some future time to remember these things".