

THE REGISTER

The termly newsletter of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford

ISSUE 18 TRINITY 2015

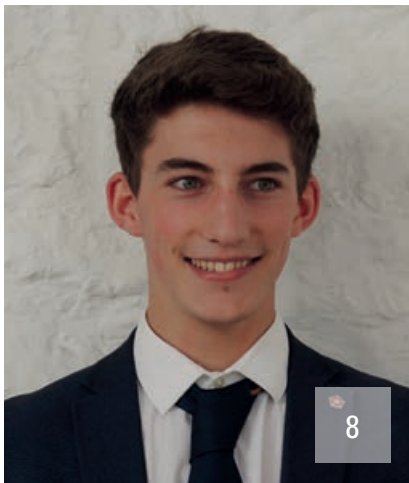


THE REGISTER



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THE HEADMASTER WRITES ...

The tragic events in Nepal of earlier in the term were given added poignancy and meaning as the School welcomed Khila Dhital, Headmaster of Janabikas School, and Chandra Gurung, Secondary English teacher at Bhu Pu School, from our international link schools in Nepal to join us for RGS Global Community Week, the very same week in which the terrifying earthquake occurred. Their warmth and enthusiasm were notable and left a lasting impression on boys and staff alike as they immersed themselves fully in school life. Despite the emotion created by the horrific news in their home country and the challenges of communication (although both Khila and Chandra had a far better command of English than my limited repertoire in Nepali!), they engaged

with genuine cordiality and openness with all whom they met as they enjoyed a busy programme which showcased the diversity of a normal week at the RGS. Our thoughts remain with all those in Nepal who continue to be affected by the aftermath of the earthquakes.

The week put sharply into perspective what is most important to us as a community. As well as signing up to various environmental pledges and raising significant sums for the Nepal relief effort, a less tangible outcome was most evident.

As a very busy term draws to a close, *The Register* provides an overview of many of the events and successes. It has been a term which has proved to be a fitting climax to the academic year as it has been characterised by vibrancy

and energy, and no little talent, in all the activities in which boys and staff have invested so much time and pride. Such achievements, however, pale into insignificance without the influence of friendship and family, and without safety and well-being. As a community these are concepts we must never take for granted.

THE ECONOMISTS

Over 200 students from 13 schools, and a number of parents, attended the annual Economics Speakers' Day where four talks introduced the audience to topical, economic concepts well beyond the confines of the syllabus. The theme for the day was *The Future*. An engaging range of speakers spoke on topics including: *An A – Z of Creative Destruction*, businesses using new economic models to threaten the existing order; *Work and Society in the Age of Smart Machines*, or *The robot will see you now...* looking at smart machines as part of a technology revolution which will drive massive business disruption and transformation; *iGeolise*, a new tech start-up business which is driving change in the economy; *Dangerous Liaisons* – when and why models go wrong. Penny Brooks, member of the Economics Department and organiser of the event, commented: "The speakers invited the audience to think, challenge and question many of their established assumptions and pre-conceptions about economics, the world of business and their future careers. I know that the audience emerged from the day with a fresh perspective on so many aspects of the political and economic landscape which inspired them to think more broadly and deeply about a number of issues."



ON AN ANTARCTIC ROLL



The School was delighted to welcome celebrated writer, explorer and National Geographic film-maker Matt Dickinson who provided an adrenaline-fuelled journey through his adventures from Antarctica to Everest. As well as regaling the audience with anecdotes about a number of inspirational female explorers with whom he had travelled – including stories of hand-gliding from a hot air balloon and climbing a massive unstable iceberg – he spoke of his own challenges. His Antarctic adventure included six months sailing through almost unnavigable waters and climbing a number of previously unattempted and avalanche-prone peaks. On one occasion, the need to remove layers of gloves to enable him to film the expedition resulted in such severe frost bite that a Sherpa kindly offered to use a rusty saw to save his doctor's fees on his return; Matt kindly but firmly refused the generous offer. His recounting of his successful summit of Everest provided a gritty insight into the mental battles, loneliness and harsh reality of the ascent, exacerbated by his decision to take 300 *Toffee Crisp* chocolate bars with him! The talk was, by turns, emotive, exhilarating and inspiring as canapés and wine returned the audience to the realities of a Surrey lifestyle!

IN POLL POSITION

For two weeks election fever hit the corridors of the School as the RGS mock election, masterminded by Head of Politics Tom Owens, captured the imagination of the whole community. Boys reinvented themselves as spin doctors; manifestos appeared daily and, indeed, hourly combining humour with political insight and ambitious promises; canvassing became increasingly impassioned and vocal. The various campaigns culminated in two candidates' debates, delivered in front of full houses in the Auditorium, where contentious topical issues such as immigration, the health service and education were debated. Further testament was provided to the power of rhetoric and personality, both of which were evident in abundance in all the candidates. As voters confidentially submitted their ballot papers at the Polling Station, a turn-out of up to 86% in some year groups highlighted the boys' interest in the political landscape. In third place came Rupert Fitzsimmons for the Conservatives, in second Timothy Foster for the Green Party and in first place – and thereby elected to the constituency of RGS Guildford – Jack Bell of the Liberal Democrats with 29.5% of the vote.



ENJOYING A PIZZA THE ACTION

The tempting allure of pizza, pasta, ice-cream and, of course, breath-taking classical sites once again proved to be irresistible as the biennial Junior Classics trip saw a well-drilled army of 89 boys and 10 awe-inspiring legionary commanders, also known as members of staff, invade Italy. The boys enjoyed an action-packed itinerary which embraced the classical and contemporary, sunshine and storms, haute

cuisine and, perhaps, more rustic fare. The first two days were spent in Rome; the next five days were based in Sorrento visiting Capri, Herculaneum, Naples, Mount Vesuvius and Pompeii, with a number of UNESCO world heritage sites visited in the process. The iconic Colosseum, the imposing Baths of Caracalla, the beautifully preserved streets of Herculaneum, the haunting expressions of the

plaster-casts in Pompeii, the idyllic beauty of the fountains and tranquillity of the gardens at Villa d'Este in Tivoli were real highlights. Climbing Vesuvius and taking the ferry to Capri in torrential rain and stormy conditions were also memorable moments! The trip proved informative, entertaining and amusing in equal measure and the boys were outstanding ambassadors of the RGS.



SCHOOL REPORT

Chemistry: In the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge, RGS boys have remarkably taken all top eight places in the world for the Under 18s, with Piers Cole scoring the maximum 550 points in this round and Peter Robinson holding the top spot in the world.

Computing: Daniel Sampson has qualified for the UK finals in the annual Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) World Championships after finishing in the top five in the Microsoft Word competition.

Drama: James Hancock and Charles Spence have had their plays long-listed for the National Theatre New Views Playwriting Competition.

English: First Form boys Zac Harrison, Sebastian Harrower, James Reina, Alasdair Tingay and Guy Tregear have had their short stories selected to go forward to the second round of the BBC Radio 2,500 Words Competition. From 120,000 entries, only 3% have been selected to progress.

Model United Nations: 16 boys represented the RGS at the renowned Haileybury MUN Conference which attracted over 700 delegates to represent the 193 member state countries of the UN. The RGS emerged with four Distinguished Delegate awards and a Highly Commended Delegation award.

Politics: James Sweetland was one of three winners in the inaugural Orwell Youth Prize with his essay entitled *Tribunal fees are a silent bedroom tax*.

Science Olympiads: The science Olympiads attracted thousands of students in these prestigious national competitions. The School achieved record-breaking results with an impressive 9 Gold, 17 Silver and 13 Bronze Awards in the Chemistry Olympiad. In the Biology Olympiad the RGS also enjoyed the School's best ever results with 15 Gold, 22 Silver and 15 Bronze Awards.

GRAND MASTER

A spontaneous standing ovation is not a common occurrence but every so often a talent emerges which fully justifies every single one of the plaudits. Michael Lan in his final few days as an RGS student gave a recital which was a pertinent reminder of just how much he will be missed and was further proof that he is one of England's most talented pianists, a talent which has flourished under the exceptional tutelage of Head of Keyboard, Jan Newman. Michael began learning the piano at six years of age; after achieving Grade 8 Distinction, he has gone on to win a variety of major piano prizes at local music festivals, most recently winning the Concerto Award at the Godalming Music Festival. He also won RGS Musician of the Year in 2014. Michael has now secured a place to continue his piano studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Those privileged enough to be in attendance at his Piano Recital enjoyed an evening of astonishing depth and talent. A programme of stunning complexity included pieces from Bach, Beethoven, Liszt, Rachmaninov and Ravel. The long and heart-felt applause and ovation at the end confirmed that the audience had experienced one of the finest RGS musicians of recent times.



THE SOUND OF MUSICA



The Music Department has, again, this term entertained and enthralled audiences in locations from the informal to the grand, with venues including Chichester Cathedral, Winchester Cathedral and even the Royal Albert Hall as part of the Guildford Choral Society's 175th Anniversary Concert. In addition, a first for the RGS saw the opera *The Judgement of Paris* performed in the courtyard of the Old Building: atmospheric, powerful and intimate. One of the undoubted highlights, however, was the School's opportunity to perform a concerto with a professional orchestra in Holy Trinity Church as RGS boys were accompanied by Southern

Pro Musica under the baton of Director of Music, Peter White. From Albinoni to Mozart, from William Walton to Vaughan Williams, the evening culminated in Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerto No. 2* given by Michael Lan: a truly masterful performance that had the audience captivated from the opening chords to the virtuosic final cadenza. Peter White commented: "The opportunity to perform in inspiring venues with some of the country's finest musicians has seen RGS boys taking their performance levels and their technicality to another level. I am grateful to all the music teachers and the boys for their genuine dedication and hard work."



OUT OF THIS WORLD

Illustr poetry / Poetrization, the illustrated poetry project, returned for its second year with an exploration of the related themes of space and time. Over the last twelve months, boys and staff wrote poems based on these themes, then handed them over to artists who created visual works inspired by them. 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 second *Illustr poetry* publication was celebrated in Big School with an exhibition of the work and a recital of some of the poems, with readings and talks from a number of the contributors. Phil Leamon commented: "We're really proud of the work this year and hope that the combination of the written form, the illustration and, for the evening itself, the recital, the display and the presence of the creators to provide context, allows the audience an insight into the boys' excellent work and brings it to life in a really different and exciting way."



CUTTING EDGE

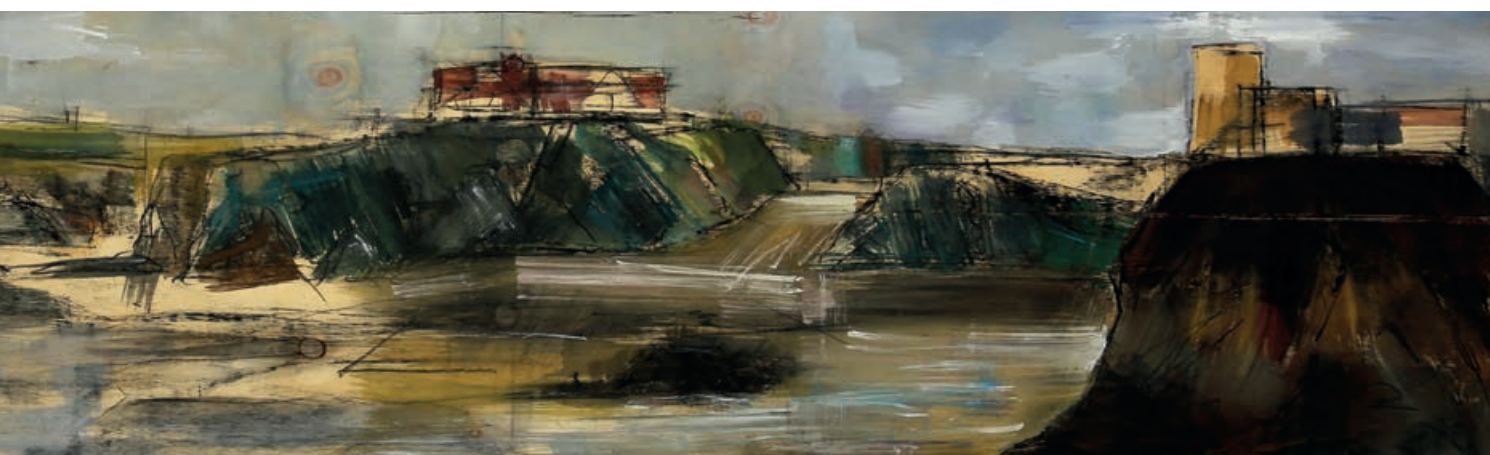
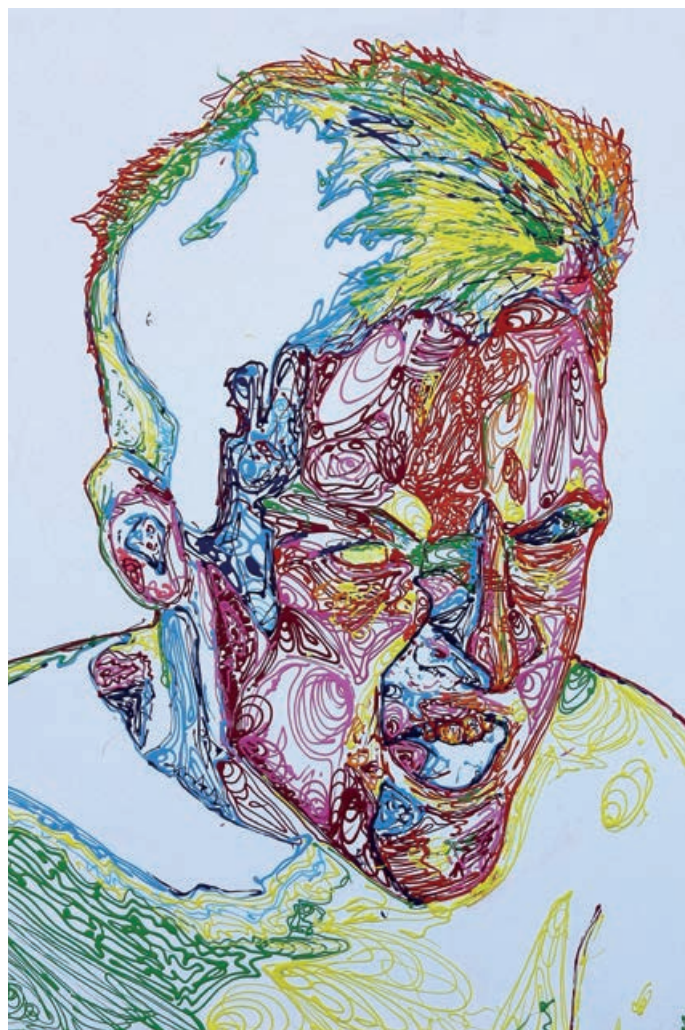
An astonishing array of creativity and invention by the boys was showcased by the Design and Technology Department in an exhibition of selected pieces of work from junior boys as well as the IGCSE and A Level examination work. In addition to the finished products, detailed explanations accompanied each piece which gave insight into the design brief, justification, prototype, production, testing and evaluation. There were a wide range of innovative and avant-garde pieces of work on show but of particular note were: a very well designed and constructed wooden high-backed chair by Vishnu Satkunabalan; an acoustically authentic wooden musical instrument: a cajón – a six-sided, box-shaped percussion instrument originally from Peru – by Guy Solan; and a professionally designed iPad / iPhone stand featuring extensive use of the 3D printer by Max Beech. A design for a modular garden building by Joseph Norton and a design for a product to help people with arthritis cut up vegetables by William Sampson also drew the attention of the appreciative visitors.



THE FINISHED ARTICLE

A beautiful summer's evening provided an idyllic backdrop to an event where canapés and drinks were the perfect accompaniment to a stroll through the Art School. The Private View of the Art Exhibition once again gave the opportunity to showcase work of extraordinary quality to an appreciative audience of boys, staff, governors, parents and guests. 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 the two self-portraits by James and Sebastian Chaumeton; the Cornish landscape sketch and painting by Daniel Churchlow; the expressive landscape by Aran Macfarlane; and Ben Barnwell's wire sculptures of a bird and horse's head. The installation by Jason Roy also drew the attention as through a film projection and recreation of the setting, all viewed through a letterbox, he provided a personal response to a recurring childhood nightmare, with the fear of annihilation at its heart.





GOING



OUT WITH A BANG

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 and to thank formally 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 signalled 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 live music and dancing. The climax of the evening was a first in the School's 506 year history, as a glittering firework display – accompanied by Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture – lit up the night sky of Guildford and provided the perfect culmination to a stunning evening.



ALTOGETHER NOW



The week of events to celebrate RGS Global Community Week was designed to recognise our responsibilities as citizens in a global community. All students were offered the chance to sign up to a pledge for the week, designed primarily to raise awareness about some of the resources which are often taken for granted. These pledges ranged from conserving electricity, food, paper or water to learning about our global heritage. As well as the involvement of our Nepalese visitors Khila and Chandra, there was a global focus in lessons, kabaddi matches and Question Time when boys had the opportunity to hear, question and explore some of the concerns raised about global issues.



Lunch times were influenced by world cuisine as the caterers took the boys on an edible journey around the world. Just under £2,500 was raised during the week to support the international relief effort for Nepal and, in addition, the generous provision of extra luggage allowance on their flights home allowed Khila and Chandra to take with them equipment to aid those most in need. Lucy Simpson, Global Links Co-ordinator, commented: "We put the fun into fundraising in Global Community Week. Though conscious of the suffering caused by Nepal's massive earthquake, the boys took opportunities to dust down their global goggles by getting fully involved in the activities and by reflecting upon the myriad of connections we all share with others."

ICING ON THE CAKE

In the not too distant past, staff have showcased their diverse and extraordinary talents from sumo wrestling, to One Direction tribute acts, to rapping; however, this term saw the staff take their raw ingredients of talent and creativity to a new level. The inaugural Great RGS Bake Off captured the competitive imagination of the staff with the theme of Best of British. For just one day, the Staff Common Room was liberally decorated with castles, wreaths, books, maps of Britain, cricket pitches, vinyl records, Union Jacks, to name but a few. The judges, including the Headmaster, had the equally enviable and unenviable task of determining the top awards. With stoic perseverance, the judges sustained a full hour of cake sampling, while awarding marks for presentation, taste and wow factor in all its many guises. After deep debate and a couple more samples just to be sure, the winning rosette was presented to Head of Drama Nancy McClean for her intricate roast dinner cake, including rare beef and Yorkshire Puddings. Director of Music, Peter White, having replaced his conducting baton with an electric whisk came second with his breakfast cake; Louise Whall's Guinness cake was third. The event was a great success and money was raised in the process for the school charity, Treloar School.



OVER AND NOT OUT

A summer which, for once, was dominated by cricket rather than the weather provided the opportunity for a thoroughly enjoyable cricket season with some exceptional performances. With the wickets being prepared to the very highest standards, the rolling Surrey countryside of the picturesque Bradstone Brook bore witness to some fantastic block fixtures, most notably against Hampton School where the RGS recorded seven wins including two ten-wicket victories; eight wins against King's College School, Wimbledon; and seven wins against St George's College, Weybridge. On an individual level, there were seven centuries: Henry Cronk (110*); Alastair Curran (134*); Edward Ferguson (128*); Jonathan French (103*); Abhay Gonella (104); Max James (118); and Alexander Sweet (103) for the 1st XI. With the ball, there were six fivers: James Blackburn 5 for 8; Matthew Harris 5 for 10; Thomas Hartley 6 for 25; Samuel Müller 5 for 6; Nicholas Ratcliffe 5 for 25; and Alexander Sweet 5 for 25 for the 1st XI. The season finished on a high as the 1st XI were crowned winners of the RGS Festival, their seventh time in the last thirteen years, after recording in just one week five out of five victories against other Royal Grammar Schools.



SPORTS SHORTS

Chess: Harry Grieve has been invited to represent England in the World Youth Chess Championships: probably the most prestigious world junior chess event.

Football: Joseph Crolla was selected for the Under 15 National Independent Schools Football Association squad to play at the Manchester United Festival against academy teams from Aston Villa, Liverpool and Manchester United.

Ice Hockey: William Lawson represented South West England at the English Ice Hockey Associations Conference Tournament and, subsequently, has been invited to attend the England Under 14 National Team Training Camp.

Judo: Oliver Platt has been invited to trial for the elite England Talent Development Squad at the Judo National Centre of Excellence after a succession of top five finishes in national ranking events.

Rowing: At the National Schools' Regatta – the biggest and highest profile regatta in the junior calendar – in the Junior 15 coxed fours Oliver Lucas, Matthew Sargent and George Wedlake won silver.

Rugby: Henry Paremain has been selected for the Harlequins Elite Player Development Group.

Sailing: Patrick Croghan and Thomas Goodbourn competed in the 29er RYA Youth Nationals against 60 other boats. Thomas finished sixth overall and was first in the Under 21 category. Patrick finished sixteenth overall in his first youth nationals appearance, as well as getting two top five finishes in a very competitive Gold Fleet.

Shooting: The 1st VIII won for the eleventh time the prestigious Country Life competition, the main cadet small-bore competition of the year. On an individual level, Rupert Fitzsimmons and William Johnson were presented with their badges for representing England 'A' in the British Schools' Home International matches.

THE ICE-CREAM OF THE CROP



An explosion of colour and bespoke sunglasses greeted the athletes on a perfect summer's day as 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. High-level athletics was accompanied by an equally impressive range of ice-creams as no less than three companies





were present to cater to each athlete from the lover of the 99 flake to the slightly more acquired taste of the strawberry and rhubarb concoction. Fuelled by such a sugar rush, there were some notable individual performances including George Eves who equalled the Middles' School Record of 11.2 seconds in the 100 metres. Despite the impassioned and effervescent efforts of the Housemasters, only one House could emerge victorious and after a tense finale in which the relays determined the final winner of the event, Beckingham House finally ended Powell's eleven year dominance of the competition. The shield was presented to the victorious House Captain of Beckingham, Cameron Morgan, by the Mayor of Guildford.



LIKE A GUST OF WIND

Upper Sixth Form student Gus Cockle has continued to make a real impression on the international stage in athletics. Gus earned his first Great Britain vest at the Loughborough International Athletics competition where he ran 8.10.01 for the 3000 metres which is a Personal Best by nine seconds and which is also currently the fastest outdoor Under 20 time

in the UK and fourth in Europe this year. Gus then made his 5000 metres debut running at the BMC in Sportcity, Manchester. He ran superbly and gained a time of 14.03.26, well within the qualifying time for the European Championships this summer: the qualifying time being 14.20.00. His 5000 metres time is the twentieth fastest time ever run by an Under 20 British athlete and

he still has another year in that age group. He is currently number 1 in the UK with a lead of over ten seconds and fifth in Europe. Gus commented: "This year has, without a doubt, been my most successful to date, and to have the opportunity to represent Great Britain against the best runners in Europe is a true honour. I look forward to competing for a medal in Sweden."



AND FINALLY ...



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Jun 4

#RGSSport

A perfect day for the junior sports team photographs in the historic Tudor courtyard of the Old Building.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
May 14

#RGSImages

Photography Society continues to ensure that our pupils maintain focus at all times.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
May 15

#RGSAcademic

Good luck to the Upper Sixth Form boys as they start Study Leave today. We wish you all the very best.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
May 18

#RGSArchive

Ancient Greek was introduced in 1949 to counter the trend of solely utilitarian & materialistic subjects.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Jun 24

#RGSGuildford

Thank you to @HolroydHowe: the food for New Boys' Reception Afternoon was simply beautiful as well as delicious.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
May 18

#RGSCCF

Ted Badham was Guest of Honour at the annual CCF Dinner which many staff & boys past and present attended.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
May 9

#RGSOGs

Thanks to Will Beynon & @BalliolOxford for hosting the OG dinner in such an atmospheric & traditional setting.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
May 18

#RGSFieldDay

The boys take a deserved break from surfing lessons as they enjoy sunshine and the beach in Cornwall.



RGS Guildford @RGSGuildford
Jun 11

#RGSOGs

The D-Day portraits exhibition, entitled The Last of the Tide, includes this portrait of Laurie Weeden.



