

Old Rendcombian Society

NEWSLETTER



QUO LUX DUCIT

MAY 1997

23rd ISSUE

Editor
W.J.D. WHITE

Contents

Society Officers	...	...	...	...	2
Notice of 64th AGM	...	...	...	...	2
Minutes of 63rd AGM	...	...	...	...	2
Dates of Future Reunions	...	...	...	...	3
O.R. Reunion 1996	...	...	...	...	3
Library Note	...	...	...	...	4
Travel Bursary	...	...	...	...	4
Marriages	...	...	...	...	4
Births	...	...	...	...	5
Congratulations	...	...	...	...	5
Obituary	...	...	...	...	5
Memorials	...	...	...	...	10
On Revisiting Rendcomb	...	...	...	...	10
Retirements	...	...	...	...	11
Staff News	...	...	...	...	13
O.R. War Service	...	...	...	...	25
In Memoriam	...	...	...	...	25
More Rendcombiana	...	...	...	...	27
The Old Hall School	...	...	...	...	28
College Photographs	...	...	...	...	28
Country Gentlemens Association	...	...	...	...	29
O.R. Sport	...	...	...	...	29
School Hockey	...	...	...	...	30
O.R. Shop	...	...	...	...	30
Thanks to the Society	...	...	...	...	31
O.R. News	...	...	...	...	31
News of Recent Leavers	...	...	...	...	34

Society Officers 1996-97

At the annual general meeting in June 1996, the following officers were elected:-

President:	Michael Miles (1943 - 50)
Chairman:	Julian Comrie (1946 - 54)
Vice-chairman:	Mrs Sally Morris (1978 - 80)
Secretary:	Mrs Jane Gunner (1975 - 77) Whiteway Farmhouse, The Whiteway, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 7BA Tel: (01285) 658627 Fax: (01285) 658717
Treasurer & school rep.:	Chris Wood (1965 - 71, staff: 1976 -) 9 Hammond Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos, GL54 3JF. Tel: 01451 860871
Committee members:	Douglas Payne (1940 - 48) Simon Wormleighton (1968 - 75) Alex Brealy (1980 - 87, staff 94 -)
Hon. auditor:	David Williams (1966 - 71)
Girls' secretary:	Hannah Willcocks (1992 - 94)
Hockey secretary:	Philip Moore (1980 - 87)
Cricket secretary:	Julian Fellows (1981 - 88)
Newsletter editor:	Bill White (staff 1961 -) 3 Jessop Drive, Northleach Cheltenham, Glos, GL54 3JG. Tel: 01451 860943

Notice of 64th AGM

You are invited to attend the 64th annual general meeting of the old Rendcombian society on 29th June 1997 in the reading room at Rendcomb College at 12.00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive minutes of AGM held on 30th June 1996
3. To deal with matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive hon. treasurer's report
5. Election of officers - none this year
6. To set amount of travel bursary fund
7. To review level of life subscription
8. Vote of thanks to the college

Minutes of the 63rd Annual General Meeting

Held at the college on Saturday 30th June 1996

Present: D.J. Payne (1940 - 48), N.J. Green (1961-69), Bill White (1961 -), Hamish Wilson (1971 - 78), Chris Wood (1965 - 71), Michael Miles (1943 - 50), Frank Dutton (1936 - 44), Jane Ganner (1975 - 77), Julian Comrie (1946 - 54), Ted Jones (1940 - 48), Neil Lumby (1968 - 73), R.F. Butler (1922 - 27), Sally Morris (1978 - 80)

1. Apologies for absence were received from: Rev. W. Hussey (1974 - 78), Vice-Admiral Sir Louis Le Bailly, David Vaisey (1945 - 54), John Tolputt (headmaster), David Williams (1966 - 71)

2. Minutes of the 62nd agm held on Saturday 8th July 1995

The minutes of the 62nd AGM held on Saturday 8th July 1995 were signed as a correct record.

There were no matters arising out of the minutes.

4. Hon. treasurer's report.

Chris Wood reported that the society's funds compared favourably with the position this time last year but this was because the arrangements for the collection of the O.R. subscriptions had been altered. The subscription charge was now sent out a term earlier which meant the bulk of the money had already been received. He also noted that the cost of the painting had nearly been recovered by its sales. However should overall costs continue to run at current levels next year there would not be enough income to cover outgoings. There had been unforeseen costs this year with an extra mailing as a result of the sad death of the Rev. Peter Sudbury, as well as a bumper newsletter. It was agreed that the situation should be kept under review and that the cost of the newsletter might be reduced by going out to tender for the printing.

As the current financial year ended on 30th June the accounts had not been audited. Chris Wood therefore recommended that the accounts be accepted in an unaudited form and that the year end should be brought forward to 31st May. This proposal was seconded by Ted Jones and passed unanimously. Year end to 31st May 1997 would therefore be an eleven month period.

The meeting then thanked Bill White for the excellent and comprehensive newsletter.

The meeting was reminded that as soon as funds allowed garden seats in memory of Kathleen James would be bought.

5. Election of Officers

The secretary had received no outside nominations. Committee nominations were as follows:-

President: Michael Miles, proposed by Ted Jones, seconded by Bill White, voted in unanimously.

Chairman: Julian Comrie, proposed by Ted Jones, seconded by Neil Lumby, voted in unanimously.

Vice Chairman: Sally Morris, proposed by Jane Gunner, seconded by Chris Wood, voted in unanimously.

At this point Neil Lumby, retiring chairman, handed over to Julian Comrie.

6. Travel Bursary

While there was concern about the lack of society funds it was felt to be important that the momentum generated by the new leaflet and application forms should be maintained. These innovations had resulted in a much better response. It was therefore proposed by Neil Lumby and seconded by Michael Miles that the committee should spend up to a ceiling of £500 on the travel bursary but that this could be reduced at the committee's discretion.

7. Life Subscription

The life subscription is reviewed every year. It currently stands at £47.50. Over the last 4 years the increment annually has been £2.50. The benefits of that increment versus the difficulty of selling it at the level of £50 were discussed. An initial proposal of £50.00 failed (5 for, 5 against). A second proposal of £49.00 also failed (5 for, 5 against). A third proposal made by Jane Gunner and seconded by Ted Jones for £49.50 was passed (8 for, 5 abstentions). The life subscription for 1997 was therefore set at £49.50.

8. The chairman then proposed a vote of thanks to the college and the headmaster for allowing the society to hold its reunion at the college. There were thanks too from the retiring president to the committee for all they had done during his presidency. He gave the secretary the gift of a magnifying glass to help her read members' handwriting. The secretary thanked Ted Jones for his kindness. There was then a formal vote of thanks to the retiring president and chairman with the secretary drawing the meetings attention to the enormous amount of work Neil Lumby had done to upgrade the merchandise and stationery of the society during his chairmanship. The meeting ended at 1.10 p.m. to adjourn to an excellent buffet.

Dates of Future Meetings

Sunday 29th June 1997	Cricket and tennis matches
Sunday 15th March 1998	Hockey matches
Sunday 7th December 1997	Rugby matches

O.R. Buffet - 1996

Among those attending were:-

Staff

Mr and Mrs J.N. Holt	Miss W. Musto	Mr and Mrs C. Wood	Mr W.J.D. White
Mrs M. Haslett	Mr and Mrs R. Kelsey	Mr and Mrs D. Hawkswell	Mr C.C. Burden
Mr and Mrs D. Essenhigh	Mr and Mrs J. Holdaway	Mr and Mrs J.R. Dennis	

20's & 30's

Mr C. Raggatt and guests	Mr & Mrs R. Butler	Mr F. Dutton and guests	Mr E. Jones
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40's and 50's

Mr and Mrs J. Goodborn	Mr and Mrs J. Comrie	Mr M. Miles	Mr and Mrs D. Payne
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60's and 70's

Mrs S. Morris (née Horne)	Mr and Mrs N. Green	Mr N. Lumby	Mr H. Wilson
Mr and Mrs R. Gunner (née Watson)	Mr P. Lyons	Mr N. Taylor	

80's and 90's

Mr A. Simmons

A Note From the Library

Many thanks to those Rendcombians who have returned library books found overlooked on their bookshelves. The response to the appeal has been encouraging, and I would like to extend the 'amnesty' for a further period! If you find you have any college library books still in your possession, then please return them to me at the college, anonymously if you wish.

M.H. Graham
Librarian

O.R. Travel Bursary

Report from William Hunt, April 1996:-
'Eine Woche In Einer Deutschen Schule'

Having met the family, I was taken home and introduced to the rest of the family (unfortunately I have no photograph of them). The family consisted of Dr Tischer, the father, Frau Tiseher, the mother, Sören (the exchange partner), Lür, the youngest son, Timo, another son and Hendrike, the daughter. After the first day I was feeling fairly confident, as I had survived a 6th form physics lesson and endless forms which had to be filled in at the bank. However, nothing could have prepared me for the shock of lessons with Timo. He was in the English equivalent of the fourth form. This, I thought, would be no problem. I assumed that I would have little or no difficulty in understanding the work, and that the pupils would be fairly friendly. As it turned out, only the latter was the case. The pupils in the class were extremely accommodating. I was surprised by the way in which my presence would go almost unnoticed. Timo had informed all his teachers that I would be joining the class, and that was all that was required. After a brief interrogation at the beginning of each lesson, in which the teachers would generally tell me about their experience of England, and ask for English translations of obscure words such as "common denominator" (which, incidentally, kept me guessing for several minutes). After this I would blend into the background. I suddenly realised that I was not such a pioneer as I had first assumed, in that the school was full of children of several different nationalities, most notably an Irish/German girl in the same class as me. I was merely referred to as "unser Engländer".

The school routine was fairly similar each day. I would get up at 6 o'clock, have breakfast, make a snack for breaktime and then cycle the several kilometres to school. Lessons started at roughly a quarter to eight. There were two lessons of forty minutes each, followed by a small break. The break was followed by a further two lessons. Then there was a larger break, during which we ate our sandwiches and played table tennis in the yard. After this large break, there were either one or two lessons, depending on the day. Students below the sixth form only have lessons in the morning.

It would be untrue to say that all I did in Germany was work. In the afternoons, after Sören had returned from work, we would cycle around the area, or meet up with some of his friends. He owned a boat which was moored at the nearby river. With the aid of one of his friends, we rowed upstream for what seemed several kilometres. We tied up at a jetty after an hour or so of rowing, and decided to go to the pub on the bankside. An hour or so later we returned to the boat and needless to say we returned a lot quicker than we had gone in the first place. The landscape of the area is very flat, not unlike Holland, and consequently it is full of lakes and rivers. Sören and I cycled along the dykes on several occasions.

On my final day I visited Bremen. We visited the huge ship museum and watched a huge supertanker coming through a lock (a process which took a mere two hours!). We were able to get a fairly good view of the proceedings from the top of a specially constructed tower which was made of old cargo crates.

In a short space of time I had become an integral part of the family, had made many friends at school, seen a great deal of the school system and enjoyed a great deal of hospitality and culture. If I had to pick one memory that will remain with me for a long time it would be baby-sitting for two German toddlers, when I had to read their bed-time story, and get them ready for bed (which included brushing their teeth!).

Marriages

Charlotte Stephens (1988 - 90) to Simon Jeffery, July 1996
Anna Wilkinson (1980 - 82) to Richard Turner. August 1996

Births

To Eva and **Julian Gray** (1964 - 71) a daughter, Louisa, May 1996
To Lyndsay and **Michael Uglow** (1977 - 84) a son, Harrison Michael James, December 1996
To **Sally** (née **Hall**) (1975 - 77) and Jonathan Ede, a daughter, Rosanna Victoria, May 1996
To Rachel and **Ben Knapp** (1977 - 84) a daughter, Olivia May, March 1997
To Amanda and **Alex Brealy** (1980 - 87, staff 1995 -), a son, Edward, March 1997
To **Ann** (née **Wimperis**) (1975 - 77) and David Southgate, a daughter Millie.

Congratulations to:

Anthony Miles (1983 - 90) on obtaining 1st class honours in psychology at the University of Leicester. He is now doing postgraduate study at Cranfield University for an M.Sc. in applied psychology.

Obituary

We have received news of the deaths of the following members of the society and extend our sincere sympathy to their families.

Robert A. Childers (1928 - 29), died in July 1996. He was the brother of the former Irish president, Erskin Childers. He lived at Annamoe in the Wicklow Hills and is buried in the village of Roundwood. We are indebted to Derek Hill (1936 - 44) for this information. He also wondered if any O.R. knows why Robert Childers came to Rendcomb "a very new and internationally unheard of school with its novel approach to education," perhaps through Canon Sewell who was connected with St Columba's Colleges.

Christopher B. Lane (1940 - 49) died in October 1996 and was buried at Checkendon Church.

Ted Jones (1940 - 48) has kindly sent this appreciation:-

Topher Lane died on 7 October at his home in Nuffield. He had fought a courageous but brief battle against cancer of the pancreas. His funeral at Checkendon Church, amongst the striking autumnal tree colours, especially the beeches, had a simple service, with a large gathering of relatives and friends. He was a talented and creative artist and sculptor. His imaginative and artistic skills were encouraged and developed at Rendcomb in the 1940's.

We were both new boys in 1940, along with ten others. In those days he preferred to be called Topher. rather than Chris. and that is how his Rendcomb contemporaries will remember him. He soon showed his natural artistic and creative abilities in the art room and in the "Manual". With a number of us he enjoyed puppetry under the sympathetic guidance of "Molly" - H U Molyneaux, the gifted art master - and we later graduated to stage plays, directed by D.W.L-B, - Denis Lee-Browne. the headmaster. I still have photographs of puppet plays and also of "The Rivals", in which Topher was a handsome and urbane Falkland. He was a good games player and team member, particularly at hockey, then Rendcomb's strongest game. He enjoyed walks and cycle rides around Rendcomb's beautiful countryside and the nearby old Cotswold stone wool towns. Although conditions were spartan in wartime and postwar Rendcomb, it had a good spirit of comradeship and self-reliance. In the sixth form his academic skills were polished by Kathleen and John James, while the art room and manual developed his creative work.

Topher studied art and sculpture at Reading and The Royal College of Art after national service in the navy. He returned to Reading University to teach those subjects and also extended his own interests and skills in those areas, including some notable bronze castings. My family's treasured possession is his striking painting of autumnal colours, acquired from his exhibition at Henley a few years past. After retiring from Reading he continued his own work, most recently in the beautifully converted Tudor ham with the studio and domestic facilities that he and his wife Lynda enjoyed.

We remained good friends and kept in touch after leaving Rendcomb. Topher was the best man when Doreen and I married in 1954 and he was a witty guest of honour almost thirty years later when our son, also a Christopher, (OR. 1966 - 73) married Christine. He kept his lively sense of humour for all of his lifetime. Earlier this year I sent him one of those showy cards depicting the Lane family crest, with ornate elaborations. His reply was to send me his design of a Jones family crest, while I appreciated its strong cricketing content, I was less keen on its numerous wine glasses and bottles - not the image a crested Jones would wish to display! His brother Peter (OR. 1937 - 43) - who flew a Fleet Air Arm Seafire along the Churn Valley in 1944, David Vaisey (OR. 1945 - 54) and I attended the funeral. Topher would have relished the sunny day and the countryside's autumnal tints on that day. Our sympathy goes to his family and especially to his widow Lynda

and his young son Sam.

E A Jones (OR.1940 - 48)

John R.V. Davies (1929 - 34) died in November 1996 of viral pneumonia after poor health over the past two years.

Mrs Parker, who lived at No. 2 Rendcomb and was a member of the college cleaning staff for many years, died in January 1997, nine days before her 100th birthday.

Cecil Price (1924 - 29) died in November 1996 after suffering from Alzheimer's disease. His widow says that he often talked of Rendcomb, remembering his friends and the staff, particularly Mr Simpson whom he admired and respected. He felt privileged to have been educated at Rendcomb which influenced his whole philosophy of life, his appreciation of music, the arts and much more. They both visited Rendcomb a few years ago.

Cedric E. Hartland (1928 - 29) died in May 1996.

Mrs Hartland writes: "He always said the happiest time of his schooldays was the year he spent at Rendcomb, he was "free" there and so enjoyed experiencing the change of seasons. It was just before he joined the school from Highgate that he decided, after an Easter visit to Holland, to train as an architect. Rendcomb was suggested by a past teacher - where he could be helped to pass the necessary examinations to apply to the Architectural Association for entrance. He obtained the A.A. diploma and after the war completed his studies to obtain a town planning degree. He became area architect at the Middlesex County Council and went on to become schools architect at the Greater London Council (1965 - 72). Then, with his town planning degree, he helped guide our local council to make decisions. Not being a councillor he could not make the final decision but his group of five local caring citizens certainly gave weight! He did this right up to his death at the age of 85, and all because his character and fine diplomacy was helped and guided by his year at Rendcomb".



Ronald H. (Roy) Bettison (1930 - 36) died in New Zealand in June 1996 aged 77. He is survived by his wife and two sons.

William E. Hanks (1965 - 68) died in December 1996.

G.B. Stanley (1926 - 27) died in January 1997. Mrs Stanley wrote to say how much her husband appreciated his boarding school days, regretting that he had to leave so soon and that he was unable to send their sons to Rendcomb. He was a countryman and proud of his country roots (he was born at Stanton, near Broadway) and became a farm manager after service in the army during the war. During his retirement he concentrated on his beautiful garden, being somewhat disenchanted with modern trends in farming.

Charlie Greaves, for many years a college "odd-job" man, died in April, failing to reach his 100th year by a few months.

Rev. Peter J. Sudbury, chaplain and priest in charge of Rendcomb, died on founder's day 1996 in Cheltenham Hospital. Although he had been ill for some three weeks, his sudden and unexpected death was devastating and scarcely credible. The respect and affection in which he was held were especially evident at his funeral service at St. Peter's Rendcomb. It was made memorable by the choir's superb singing and the congregation of over 300, many of whom had the service relayed to them as they sat in sunshine in the churchyard. Three weeks later a memorial service was held at St Philip and St James, Leckhampton where Peter had been curate under Canon David Nye, now vicar of Northleach. who conducted both services. Many old Rendcombians were in the congregation of over 500. The choirs of the church and college under the direction of David White provided a magnificent contribution to the service in the singing of Parry's "I was glad" and Peter's niece sang "Ave Maria" by Schubert. The headmaster read a passage entitled "I thank thee, God," by Elizabeth Craven and an address was given by Bill White. From his arrival at Rendcomb in 1986,

Peter had been involved in all aspects of Rendcomb life. His influence was felt on the games field, in debates, at all kinds of functions and of course in the church. His genial personality affected all who met him, and his wise counsel was sought and appreciated. All OR's who knew him will wish to extend their sympathy to Christine, David and Richard.

The following tributes to Peter have been received:-

From Matthew Faircloth (1984 - 89)

In 1986, Mr Sudbury burst into Rendcomb life. It was clear on arrival that he was to become a major figure in the school and village. There were few aspects of the diverse activities in the school that did not involve him in some way. My first personal contact came in the choir, where the bass section was significantly boosted by the arrival of the new chaplain with his strident if occasionally slightly wobbly singing voice. We would sit at the back and try to kid Tim Lane that we knew where to come in and that counting sixteen bars rest was far more entertaining than discussing the recent form shown by the under 16 XV. From the choir stalls one was, of course, afforded a close view of the preacher, or rather more significantly, he or she had clear sight of the choir and this had hitherto prevented any quiet snoozing on a



Sunday morning. This was of course before we had been treated to sermons based on the antics of the Sudburys' two Yorkshire terriers, whose recent behaviour could be guaranteed to parallel the lesson of the day, and which dispersed the desire to sleep. Another frequent introduction to an oration was an account of some event from the Reverend's days in the army, and many a vivid scene was conjured up in this way, which certainly made the underlying message all the more tangible, and which delivered it effectively to pupils of all ages. It was not until later that many of us realised quite what a skilful preacher and orator Mr Sudbury was with his ability to capture the congregations' imagination so effectively.

For several months I visited Mr Sudbury at home with a small group of confirmation classes. We were a group of mostly sixth formers and had many a stimulating discussion seated in the study of the rectory. At that age we had many difficulties with forming an understanding of God and religion, and once again Mr Sudbury demonstrated his real gifts as a chaplain and vicar, guiding us through biblical events and traditional church thinking to the real meaning underneath, which enabled us to come to terms with doctrines which were otherwise difficult to resolve.

In addition to being a stalwart of the choir, our new chaplain became quickly involved in all manner of music in the school. He was instrumental in the formation of a barber shop quartet, which I sure provided as much amusement in its genesis and during rehearsals as it ever did when we finally came to perform to an audience. It was at Mr Sudbury's suggestion, and after being dared by him, that at the end of the final number, I threw my (wooden) boater into the audience which hit some poor unfortunate, square on the nose and broke it. Never a quiet retiring sort of vicar, Mr Sudbury opted for a change of career when he took on the role of one of the constables in *The Pirates of Penzance*. The sight of the strapping chaplain paired with the equally imposing Jock Newby marching into the relatively diminutive Mike Bews as sergeant brought the house down every evening of the production.

Of course, it was not just in the area of music that Mr Sudbury extended himself beyond his primary position as chaplain; he was an active and interested member of the sports coaching staff. In the Christmas term, the navy blue tracksuit would make its first of many appearances, as the first and second years were introduced to rugby, a teaching which I did not benefit from myself but which has reaped results as successive years have passed through the school. After Christmas came the coaching of the sub-4th XI hockey players, and I have no doubt that the sharpening of skills, not to mention sticks, on the asphalt was a key factor in the long lived success of the 4th XI which drew its players from Mr Sudbury's academy. When not instructing in sport, our chaplain was frequently to be found 'up top' with Humphrey and Perkins, his loyal and loving canine companions, watching teams at all levels compete and lending his vociferous support.

Although Mr Sudbury was college chaplain and the parish vicar, he was also a schoolmaster. His universal popularity throughout the college however, marked him out as being rather different to the traditional teacher. He had the very unusual quality of being able to form a rapport with pupils of all ages, in all years and was able to cross divisions within year groups. He did this by maintaining a genuine interest in all the boys. He was a true exponent of Rendcomb's pastoral system. To younger boys, he presented a friendly yet reliable and firm figure, possibly father-like. Those in the more rebellious middle years found an affinity with his affable

roguishness, and with teenage sons of his own Mr Sudbury well understood the particular difficulties of this age group. To sixth formers anxious to be perceived as adults he was able to combine both the respect that was so desired while at the same time allowing people (girls as well by this age) to talk about potentially difficult or embarrassing subjects, sex, abortion and drugs. One of his particular skills was to prevent any individual feeling that they were ill informed in these areas; and thus avoiding a loss of face.

To have known Mr Sudbury was unquestionably a privilege. The memories of him and the knowledge gained from him will be lifelong for myself and many others. To his widow Christine Sudbury and his sons I offer my sincere condolences, and I am sure that these sentiments are shared by all who knew this wonderful man.

(Matthew Faircloth is senior house officer in general medicine and cardiology at Ashford Hospital, Middlesex).

From Andrew Martin (1987 - 94)

Peter Sudbury will be remembered by all those who were taught by him for a long time. His influence spread further afield than Rendcomb, his days in the army serving as fond memories for those who served with him, and organising the community service scheme for the elderly in Cirencester. Indeed, my own memories go back to the first year when I took up a privileged place in the infamous "Sudbury All-Stars", the very name treading fear into all the opposition teams. Under the wing of such an almighty coach we went from strength to strength, although it escapes me how many matches we won.

Off the pitch he was an academic all rounder, teaching English and biology as well as religious studies/PSE (I never did find out what PSE stood for). His open religious views will always be thought of, often quick to provide an alternative explanation for what some may see as a miracle, but always stressing that it was up to us to make up our own minds.

Finally there were his sermons, often based upon his days in the army, whether serving in Northern Ireland or further afield. However, a mention of Peter would not be complete unless Humphrey and Perkins, his two Jack Russells, were mentioned. This duo were also the subject of many a sermon, and often if you saw Peter you could be guaranteed that the two dogs were not far behind.

It is ironic that about a man who featured so much in life at Rendcomb I can find so little to say. Many of the people to whom I have spoken about Peter all sum him up in the same way, a kind, friendly and approachable person who will be dearly remembered by all those who knew him.

(Andrew Martin is reading Biology as Exeter University)

From Jenny (née Watson, 1978 - 80) and Adam (1980 - 82) Phelps

When I think of Peter the same pictures come to mind. It is either in the meadows at Rendcomb, out for a stroll with the terriers or walking in the park on a summer's evening. This reflects the fact that we were never often in the church, as Peter would occasionally remind us. except to get married or to have the children christened. Little did Peter know how memorable our marriage would be for him, as we were forever losing our wedding certificate and asked him for copies at least three times.

I remember the last time I spoke to him, he laughed with jovial disbelief that it could actually happen again. "Jenny" he said "what have you done with it this time?" He agreed the fact that I was indeed completely useless and mentioned that it meant he would have to walk all the way to the church. I thought as usual he was joking. The next thing I knew, a few weeks later, he had died. I actually could not believe it.

Before I went to Peter's funeral I thought I was the only one who felt a special fondness for him, but when I was there, I realised that hundreds of other people felt just the same. What was it about him that stirred such affection in people? It was not something tangible, it was many things: dependability, strength, integrity, warmth.

I am still confused about religion, but it made me think that maybe once a long time ago there was a man that had these qualities so strongly that people felt so reassured by his presence that they followed him around and wrote books about him. Even in death, this man left them with the feeling that if he had gone before, there was nothing to fear.

Well that's something of how I feel having known Peter. That he was a true representative of the church just being who he was. That he himself was a light in the window when things got dark in our neck of the woods. Now I find myself writing a sermon! Well if that's the case, perhaps even miracles are possible, but I'm sorry, Peter, I still prefer the Park to the pew!

With love and fond memories.

(Jenny & Adam Phelps live at Poulton)

From Hamish Auld (1985 - 92)

Mr Sudbury and his family came to Rendcomb whilst I was in the Junior House. They brought an even

stronger bond to the caring and supportive atmosphere of the college and community. Mr Sudbury helped where he could around the college including the choir and sports. I can remember him coaching juniors at all the sports in the calendar as I participated in my own.

You could guarantee at any home fixture Mr Sudbury would bring Humphrey and Perkins, his two Jack Russells to support Rendcomb, bellowing words of encouragement to all competitors. There was something very comforting in the tone of Mr Sudbury's voice in church whether the subject was serious or otherwise. His sermons were never lectures, hence the opportunity to "nod-off" on a Sunday morning never arose! Mr Sudbury was always around to listen to our problems and guide us along the right road. He gave great support to me and my family during my years at Rendcomb, especially in the earlier years, when tragedy struck and I felt lost. Mr Sudbury was always there, never to judge only to listen. I will miss him greatly.

As a policeman in the "Pirates of Penzance" he certainly was a "happy one", maybe Mr Sudbury missed his vocation. As for Humphrey and Perkins, they popped up frequently in Mr Sudbury's sermons, illustrating to us lessons in life with great humour.

Christmas 1995 will be well remembered by many as a very sad time due to the unforeseen death of Graham Bennett. Many people didn't know where to turn, but having Mr Sudbury conducting Graham's service gave them heart. Little did I think that, soon after Graham passed away, I would be back in church attending Mr Sudbury's funeral. I know he will be sorely missed in the community of Rendcomb.

I am sure I can speak on behalf of many when I say that our thoughts and blessings are with Christine and her family.

(Hamish Auld is at present in New Zealand)

Sonnet - 26th May 1996
(In Memoriam - The Reverend Peter Sudbury)

The white cow parsley grows and bends in the roadside grass.
Wafting and waving as the air blows past
Beneath a sky of white and grey.
Beyond, the damp fields lie tired and still
For spring has broken and lost her will
And the calling birds steal softly away.
Nature sings quietly its sad Sunday song.
And its face turned away, admits "He is gone".

The toll of the bell ripples the still air,
And through bedroom windows at daybreak we stare
At a darkened church spire against the cold skies.
Whilst the brown earth softens with each spit of rain.
And on the quiet oak trees, the fresh leaves remain,
And in every dark tuber, green life still lies.

Jack Jelfs (1989 - 96)

From the *Gunner* magazine:-

Major The Reverend Peter Sudbury

Some people believe that the accuracy of an assessment by one's juniors may be at least as accurate as any made by one's superiors. The following is an extract from a letter about Peter Sudbury, who died suddenly last May at the young age of 55. It comes from a former pupil at Rendcomb College, Cirencester, where Peter had been chaplain since 1986.

"Major The Reverend Peter Sudbury was to me and to all who had the privilege of knowing him in his capacity as the school chaplain, or as the master who taught religious studies, or just as a friendly face to whom pupils could always talk easily on any subject - to all of us he was a person who will be sorely missed. He entered into every facet of school life, be it at church on Sunday morning, or shouting encouragement from the touchline to sports teams, or giving advice to a confused pupil, he was there for one and all of us. He was a cornerstone of school life".

So wrote Captain Giles Carter RHA. His evocative words completely describe Peter Sudbury's character, and soldiers undoubtedly felt the same way. No greater compliment can be paid. Peter was educated in Kenya and at Rhodes University, Grahamstown where he read biology. He was commissioned into the Regiment in 1963 and served subsequently with 36 Regt, I RHA 9in Aden), 17 Trg Regt (as Adjutant), 40 Regt, HQRA 4 Div and in 25 Regt, where he commanded 93 (Le Cateau) Battery. With that regiment he served in Northern

Ireland, earning a mention in despatches as well as being seriously wounded by a nail bomb. In 1973 he left the army to study at Salisbury and Wells Theological College and was ordained in 1979. An appointment as a curate in a Cheltenham parish was followed by several years as vicar of two parishes simultaneously (Preston and Siddington and St James's - both near Cirencester). In one of these the Air Despatch Regiment at South Cerney was located and Peter was ex-officio its chaplain, a post for which he was, of course, exceptionally well fitted. As time went by he also became chaplain to the Wessex Yeomanry and to the Gloucester army cadets.

In 1986 he was appointed chaplain of Rendcomb College, a few miles from Cirencester and, while there, he obtained a master's degree in theology from Oxford University. At the college, his sincerity, his integrity, his approachability, his sense of humour, his interest in games (he was a useful rugby and hockey player and an accomplished cricketer - a game which he loved and which, together with biology, he taught at Rendcomb) all contributed to his great success in this appointment.

Peter never lost touch with his army friends and initiated a St Barbara's day service in the college chapel for the gunners in Gloucestershire. He became a deputy commissioner in the St John's Ambulance Service and was awarded a medal for his services as well as being appointed to the Order of St John of Jerusalem. He once remarked to the writer that he was finding it easier to acquire medals in civilian life than it had been in the army!

The memorial service for Peter Sudbury was held in Cheltenham in the parish church where he was once a curate. The church can seat 500 people: and it was packed. This was an unspoken tribute to a man described in an address by one of his schoolmaster colleagues as "large of stature and big of heart".

The regiment's sympathy goes out to his widow and their two sons (one of whom teaches at Rendcomb) and to Peter's brother, Tim, who was himself for a time a regular gunner officer.

GSH

Memorials

The OR. society has provided wooden seats for use in the college grounds in memory of Mr D.W. Lee-Browne, and Mr J.C. James. The committee is currently arranging for similar memorials to be provided for Mrs K.L. James and the Rev. P.J. Sudbury. These will be provided from the society's funds, but donations will be gratefully received from any OR's who would like to make a personal contribution in memory of Mrs James or Mr Sudbury. Depending on response, it might be possible to provide some further memorial to these two much respected members of staff.

On Revisiting Rendcomb

Frank Dutton (1936 - 44) has sent a number of reminiscences about his time at Rendcomb, some of which may appear from time to time. Following are his thoughts after his return in 1994, after a gap of 34 years:-
"On Saturday May 21, 1994 I visited Rendcomb for the first time in almost thirty five years. A lengthy absence - The last occasion, I think, had been on Boxing Day 1960 when I was staying for the holiday at Cirencester Hospital with brother Bill, who was a member of the medical staff there at the time. I believe he was present during D.W. L-B's final illness. On a foggy frozen afternoon we journeyed to Rendcomb where we were given tea by John and Vera Fell. John and I had not met since July 1939 and there was much catching up to do. He took us on a brief external tour of the main buildings. As it was holiday time everything was locked up and shuttered. As far as I was able to judge, all was more or less as I remembered, this being confirmed by John in respect of the internal arrangements.

However, the 1994 visit was certainly something else. I had the normal Dutton good fortune to select (in advance) possibly the wettest Saturday of that spring on which to make my visit, and as a result all of the outdoor tour by Chris Jarrett was conducted beneath umbrellas. Despite this handicap it was a most enlightening time for me. Although I had been well aware from newspaper reports and other sources that a major building and expansion programme had been taking place, I was almost entirely unprepared for what actually appeared before me. Lawn, Godman, Stable, Park, swimming pool, house extension, arts block, assembly hall - all were new to me. My thirty-odd years' hiatus made the sudden contrast between what I remembered and what I now saw all the more impressive, probably more so than for those who had viewed the continuous and gradual development throughout that period.

Two factors impressed me most of all, apart from the sheer size and scope of the development as a whole. One was the complete redecoration and refurbishment of the main building. In my day (1936 - 44) virtually nothing of this nature took place, and even then the building's interior was starting to appear shabby and run-down. For example, I remember 'big school' (the 'reading room' to recent souls!) as being a depressing shade of Windsor

soup brown with upper walls a faded cream and a white ceiling, while the music room - later the dining room extension - was set out in a particularly virulent shade of "institution" green replacing the Windsor soup. But now, what a startling improvement. The ceilings of the main halls, library and reading room are absolutely eye-catching in their new magnificence. All that red, gold and "Wedgwood blue". And Saul's hall now makes a most striking entrance area - but I must concur with the vast majority by commenting that it is such a pity that the otherwise handsome billiard table couldn't have been housed elsewhere. Perhaps a purpose-built home could be provided for it in the next expansion programme?

Passing thought: whatever happened to the music room's huge marble fireplace, the equally huge mirror above it and the two marble statues in their individual niches on either side? Were they sold off perhaps as Victorian antiques?

The other factor which impressed mightily, compared with my day, was the sheer luxury of the place. Apart from the formal tuition which was almost invariably top-drawer, the facilities and general living conditions in earlier years were frankly basic. Of course, those of us who were there were not really aware of this fact, and most just accepted Rendcomb as it then stood. In my case, arriving from a fairly humble country home, it did not appear basic at all. Only now, with the contrast so apparent, can I see all that we missed, unknowingly, in our time.

The arts block in particular opened my eyes to the range of current facilities. Yes, we had a manual workshop and yes, we had an art room, but nothing on the scale of what is now available. Take music as an example: one used to be able to learn piano or violin, the latter from a visiting instructor - and that was IT. Now there is tuition for almost any instrument one cares to name - even saxophone and drums! I still wish that I'd had the opportunity to learn to play clarinet and alto saxophone, although a certain Johnny Hodges would never have needed to look to his laurels.

At the 75th Anniversary weekend in July 1995 I heard comments from a few senior O.R.'s to the effect that "the place isn't the same any more". Well why should they have considered this a cause for dissatisfaction? Conditions never remain static, despite wishful thinking that they would, and change occurs inevitably, however slowly. For my part I can see little if anything to carp about on the current Rendcomb scene - on the contrary, there has been a sustained programme of vast improvement in almost all quarters. The one thing that I really regret is the cessation of regular annual intakes of foundation students. As one of these I can only say - in company of very many others, I'm certain - that even before I arrived I considered myself fantastically fortunate to be able to go to Rendcomb at all (there were just five foundation entrants in my year, 1936, out of anything up to 250 applicants). For my parents to have paid for me to attend would have been completely beyond the bounds of possibility. I suspect now that they may have had financial problems merely in complying with the extensive requirements in the list of school clothing and personal items.

The thought that Gloucestershire youngsters like myself - with a few special exceptions - will now not have this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity which by the greatest of good fortune came my way, is for me a most sad and depressing one.

Retirements

Ted Jones

Many of you may not be aware that the society's president, Ted Jones (1940 - 48) completed his term of office last year. With this in mind I thought I would take the opportunity of thanking him, on behalf of the OR. society, for all his effort.

A keen correspondent, Ted had maintained a high profile at society committee meetings and functions and has wholeheartedly involved himself in society affairs. I know this has not been particularly easy for him due to commitments at home and work abroad - he must be one of the society's most travelled members!

Some of you may well have met him last year, at the 75th anniversary ball, where he entertained the society's most senior member, Colin Raggat (1920 - 26), and the headmaster with characteristic enthusiasm.

It would be easy to underestimate Ted's contribution to the society - there are no specifics I can relate. He has always been "part of the team", considerate and supportive with his ideas and thoughts, and a reliable spokesman. And the committee has been especially thankful for this.

I do hope that Ted will maintain his interest in the society by joining the committee whenever he is able. In the meantime the Society wishes him all the best for the future.

Neil Lumby (1968 - 73), chairman 1993 - 96

Neil Lumby

Julian Comrie took over the chairmanship of the society from Neil Lumby at the AGM last summer and as

well as wishing Julian an enjoyable and successful time in office, it is certainly most appropriate to thank Neil for his achievements during a period of three years as chairman. The chairperson can be a key figure in any organisation and the OR Society is no exception. Neil took over the chair with great enthusiasm and a head full of ideas in 1993. He is a great supporter of the society and its events, having played in the hockey matches on many occasions, and there is usually no difficulty in picking him out in a crowd! Despite having to travel up from deepest Somerset, where they obviously breed chairpersons (Julian also lives in Somerset) Neil always managed to attend meetings and events although it must be said that he displayed a remarkable variety in his timing and mode of transport! However once in a meeting Neil is very sharp and keen to make the society as effective as possible and his chairing of meetings was always firm, fair and never without humour. As a graphic designer he often brings his skills to bear and anyone who has purchased a sweatshirt or rugby leisure shirt will know how good these garments are with their characteristic "Old Rendcombian" crest. He also influenced the commissioning of the watercolour painting of the school to celebrate the 75th anniversary, prints of which are on sale (see OR shop), but he really went into overdrive for the anniversary ball in 1995 which was such a success. He worked tirelessly alongside other members of the ball committee, probably risking divorce as often happens when so much time is allocated to something outside the family. I am pleased to say that Neil has remained on the committee because someone with such a wide range of skills and ideas is a real asset to our society.

C.J.W.

John Holt's Valedictory Speech at the OR. Buffet in June.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for your generous gift and good wishes. The other day I received a "Best wishes on your retirement" card from an old friend of ours, **Ron Caves**, who some of you may recall was head of chemistry here in the 1960's before moving back to his native Ulster. In his card he had scribbled a brief definition of retirement: "A new life, and a better life". It sounds like paradise on earth. However, this, one feels, is a time for unashamed nostalgia.

I was appointed by **Anthony Quick** in 1968 to be head of English at a small, quaint Cotswold school of which East Kent had scarcely heard. There were 145 pupils, all boys, all boarders, all in grey, mostly intelligent - including **Chris Wood**, the terror of form five. The head boy was **Colin Maberley**, but the real mafia godfather was a boy called **Nicholas Wapshott**, now a prominent "Times" journalist. Periodically he parodied the headmaster in comic sketches at Christmas and he extended the comedy to an amusing performance as Malvolio in "Twelfth Night". Roughly speaking, the school, with some exceptions, had one teacher per subject, men like **John James**, **Jack Fell**, and **Chris Swaine**, who were top-class specialist teachers who would have been an asset to any school. Of that class of 1968, only **Bill White** (who runs your OR. affairs so superbly) and **Colin Burden** are still left hanging in there, as they say. Now we have 240 pupils of both sexes; boarders, weekly boarders, day pupils, and maybe other hybrid categories of which I am ignorant. Many pupils, instead of reading, prefer to push buttons and wait for the seductive image. There are spell checks, you press a button and a kindly Japanese technologist instantly corrects your error. I am still not clear how this actually improves your own spelling but perhaps I shall see the logic one day.

Co-education has, in my view, transformed the Rendcomb atmosphere dramatically for the better. I remember the very first girl pupil here in the early 70's. an American called **Maxine Bauer**. who was literally the only girl in the school - a harbinger with a twang. In her final year she knocked on the door of **Denis Price's** flat in Park House at about 11 o'clock at night. He was about to have a bath - in those days housemasters had time for such luxuries. It was the day before her 'A' level English exam and she asked him to explain to her what T.S. Eliot's poem "The Waste Land" was all about. I suspect that his answer was unprintable; I think mine would have been, have you got 15 hours to spare?

For 12 years, Anne and I ran Godman house, the boys' third form boarding house which opened in 1975 - a sort of semi-controlled zoological experiment. We learnt to be surprised at nothing. One amusing moment of quick thinking was provided by **Kojo Aman**, a Nigerian. He was the only coloured pupil in the school and he had been sent to me by an irate young colleague, **Dominic O'Connor**, for poor behaviour in a hockey practice. "I think, Sir," Kojo said to me in all seriousness, "that Mr O'Connor must have confused me with someone else."

On another occasion a boy called **Nicholas Wharmby** knocked on our front door at about 3 o'clock in the morning. I staggered downstairs in my pyjamas and he asked if we could let him in because he had fallen out of a first floor window while sleepwalking. I believe he is now an RAF pilot, so perhaps aerial flight was in his blood even at that tender age.

Talking of letters of good wishes on retirement, I was delighted to have another such recently from **Catherine Ledger**, who was among the earliest Park House girls in the mid 70's. She was one of probably the most

successful 'A' level group lever taught at Rendcomb. Catherine now apparently runs a literary agency on the edge of Bloomsbury, in London, so if I can persuade her I am the 90's answer to Virginia Woolf, I may find some gainful employment yet.

You all have a real affection for this corner of Gloucestershire, as your presence today demonstrates. I have too, otherwise I would not have spent over three quarters of my career at the college. Who can forget the view from the terrace here across the valley, perhaps in high summer when the house martin, Shakespeare's 'temple-haunting martlet,' builds his nest on this main building's wall. And at the other extreme, who can forget umpiring a hockey match 800 feet up 'on top' in a February snowstorm?

The past few years, with the recession and the adverse, often misplaced media criticism of boarding education, have been very difficult for independent schools, especially for small rural schools such as ours. I would like to pay tribute to those at the top of the school - senior management, as we must call them these days - who have worked tirelessly to recruit pupils and secure the college's future.

This brings me, inevitably, to our late chaplain, **Peter Sudbury**, who was prominent in this group as head of marketing and whose beautiful memorial service took place yesterday in Cheltenham, with many of you present. I cannot adequately convey to you the shock-waves generated on founder's day when the headmaster had the unenviable task of announcing Peter's death to the assembled pupils, parents and staff. The customary noisy half-term euphoria was replaced this year by a sombre silence. He has left a vast hole in the school's communal tapestry but also, thankfully, a permanent example and a wonderful legacy of comradeship and work accomplished.

Thank you again, finally, for your good wishes. I confess to feeling a bit like a piece of soggy spam in a sandwich since, as head of department. I am being succeeded by a woman, just as I myself succeeded a woman in 1968 - Kathleen James, who also sadly died quite recently. We shall not go far away because Anne is continuing to run her Cirencester nursery school (Gloucestershire's educational best buy). For the time being, then, I plan to sleep, listen to great music, read novels and poetry for pleasure and not for teaching purposes, play geriatric tennis and even worse bridge, save up cash to go to the theatre and opera, walk my West Highland white terrier mark 3 and resume battle with "The Times" crossword. I might even get a part-time job. As I said at the start, "A new life, and a better life". Thank you very much for listening and good luck to all of you, of whatever Rendcomb vintage.

John Holt

Staff Common Room News

Mr W.J.D. White is retiring at the end of the summer term.

Mr C.C. Burden is retiring at the end of the summer term.

Mr B.L. North has joined the staff as head of French. He was previously on the staff of Sir Thomas Rich's School and Cheltenham College.

Mrs K. Ewing has joined the staff as head of English and drama. She came from St. Mary's School, Wantage.

Mrs J. Gibson has joined the staff to teach chemistry and physics part-time. She has taught at Gloucester High School.

Mr C. Vuolo is head of boys' PE and teaches biology: He was previously at St. Birinus School, Didcot.

Miss P. Harrison has returned to Rendcomb for one year as an assistant in the French department, after a year in Turkey.

Mr T. Gillard is marketing manager.

Mr M.J. Newby is now deputy head at Bedstone School.

Mr and Mrs J. Stutchbury are leaving Park House after 4 years, their position will be taken on by **Mr and Mrs H. Blackwell**.

Russell Riste, catering manager, left Rendcomb last summer.

Bill White

Most members of the society will be surprised to learn that Bill White (WJDW) is retiring after 36 years of teaching at Rendcomb. He is so well known to OR's even if they were not fortunate enough to have been taught by him, because he took over the role of school representative from Jack Fell in 1973 and, as the subscription no longer covered the cost of sending each member a copy of the Rendcomb Chronicle (the school magazine), he introduced the OR. newsletter in 1975 as a three page foolscap experiment. Thanks to his skills as a correspondent and his interest in the society and in individual OR's, this newsletter has become an essential annual communication which keeps OR's in touch with each other and with the progress of the school. Happily Bill wishes to remain as newsletter editor which also means that the committee will continue

to benefit from his wisdom and experience in OR. matters. His dedication to the society and his efficiency as an administrator were most apparent in 1995 when he played a most important part in organising the 75th anniversary ball which was such a huge success.

To quote the first History of Rendcomb, "Latin fell into the capable hands of W.J. White in 1961" when Bill took up his first full time teaching post in this country. This was a time of several staff changes including the new headmaster, Anthony Quick. Bill had been appointed to teach Latin and English and he also found himself running activities and coaching rugby. In the classroom Bill's cocktail of discipline, anecdotes, wit, humour and personal interest make him a most effective teacher and anyone who has experienced his lessons cannot fail to remember some of them with affection. Despite the article in a College Chronicle entitled "The Art of Failing Latin Successfully", by P.W.H., Bill's success as a language teacher is clear and this includes French which he taught from 1966 and which he enjoyed enormously. Latin was not restricted to 'O' level, and later GCSE, for sixteen year olds and consequently many sixth formers were able to enjoy his popular classics course. Bill was always very adaptable in terms of techniques - yes, a TV and video was installed in room L - and accommodation which latterly moved to the first floor. No one was surprised when Bill was deservedly complimented by the Ofsted inspector during the 1996 inspection.

But Bill's contribution to school life was much wider and the "time honoured Rendcomb pastime of gardening was given a new impetus as the Rendcomb Boarders under WJDW took charge of the college flower borders". This was as an activity for non-cricketers and for PW and everyone certainly benefited visually from their green fingers. A visit to college will confirm that Bill's influence has resulted in colourful borders and urns, some of which have been replaced in recent times, all contributing to the attractive setting of the school. Readers will be pleased to learn that Bill, with the help of Tony Partridge, intends to continue to care for the gardens for the foreseeable future.

As a hockey player himself and a great supporter of the game, Bill has made a terrific contribution to Rendcomb hockey over the years. The Chronicle reported: "Under the enthusiastic coaching of Mr White many new boys have quickly become accustomed to the game". Bill coached hockey at many different levels always with great success and this understatement from a school magazine fails to express the love of hockey which Bill managed to transfer to his teams. He still enjoys seeing the success of Rendcomb hockey and OR's probably do not realise the pleasure they gave him recently when they produced five teams to play the school in what turned out to be close matches played with great skill and spirit.

In 1966, Bill took on the great responsibility of running the senior house in the main building and in so doing helped the development of many individuals with his sympathetic yet firm approach. This overlapped by two years with the post of senior master which he took over from Jack Fell in 1973. This brought further responsibilities including the construction of the school's timetable which was always done with great care and consideration for staff and pupils alike. In 1985, Bill was relieved of some of these chores but he still did a significant amount of school administration and this, together with his respected contribution to most school matters, warranted the creation of the post of senior master.

OR's may have quite different memories of their contact at school with Bill White. Perhaps it was the bridge club, started in 1972 at the request of some sixth formers, bell ringing, singing, sponsored walking, church ushering or Christmas parties (his portrayal as Soames in 1968 was recorded as being particularly impressive). It would be a serious omission not to mention Bill's enormous contribution to St Peter's Church, Rendcomb. Besides being PCC secretary for 25 years, deputy church warden and recently church warden, he has trained many pupil ushers to a high standard and his delivery of morning prayers is memorable. The care taken over public speeches is known to many, especially those who attended Peter Sudbury's memorial service last year, and that is why the sixth form ask him to give the address at the leavers' service in May year after year. He always seems to find the right tone for the occasion, as well as illustrating the talk with a number of humorous anecdotes. Recently, in the absence of a chaplain, he has ensured the continuation of morning prayers and other services.

So after a lifetime of excellent teaching, maintaining high standards and educating pupils in the widest sense, Bill retires to Northlcatch. He will be busy with gardening, walking and singing to mention but a few of his interests. I am particularly fortunate to have been taught by Bill, to have worked alongside him and now for him to be a neighbour and walking partner. All OR's will want to wish Bill a long and happy retirement and in return Bill will want you to keep in touch just as you have done in the past.

The following articles from the three headmasters with whom he worked and from OR's give an indication of the qualities of this man who has been a key figure in the development of Rendcomb College and of the great respect and gratitude felt towards Bill.

C J Wood (1965-71, staff 1976 -)

From **Anthony Quick** (headmaster 1961-71)

Bill White and I joined the staff at Rendcomb at the same time - the beginning of the Christmas term of 1961. At that time the school was minute (about 90 boys) and was not a member of the headmaster's conference. So for those with a conventional education and no knowledge of Rendcomb's special position the decision to join the staff was something of a leap in the dark. Moreover the college was not easy to find, thick belts of trees made it impossible to see the college from the main road and even when the drive was reached the main building was largely hidden as there was a high bank on the left thickly planted with laurels where the arts block now stands. This was because it was the tradesman's entrance to the Victorian mansion and therefore to be discreetly hidden from those who lived there in state.

I suspect that John James, second master for many years and acting headmaster since the death of Denis Lee-Browne, played a leading part in stilling doubts that first impressions gave to us. John, with one or two others, had managed despite the difficulties of the war and post war years to maintain the highest academic standards at Rendcomb and was a most reassuring figure. He had a considerable reputation in academic circles and was an acquaintance of Bill's father, a well-known headmaster. He succeeded in convincing both Bill and myself that there was a great future for the school despite its dilapidated condition.

Bill started his teaching in the room later known as the Latin room. At that time it doubled up as a common room for a senior form. Much space was taken up by banks of lockers, guitars, and all the junk that schoolboys inevitably have, so Bill had to fight hard to secure a foothold for the teaching of Latin and French. The light, clean, orderly and classical appearance which Bill brought to the room was a total transformation. His classroom was a microcosm of the changes that Bill has played a major part in bringing about at Rendcomb in the thirty six years he has been on the staff.

The very scope of the changes that have taken place right through his time at Rendcomb has made his role all the more vital. He has been through the years a force for stability and continuity, for good order and sound learning, and has given his energy and time unsparingly. He held for many years the two key posts in the running of the school - first as master in charge of the main building and then as second master. There was nothing meretricious or mercurial in his approach. Pupils and colleagues knew where they were with him and they liked him for that. Though he might appear dogmatic, he was considerate and sympathetic. He brought imagination and humour to the task of making Latin and French interesting. He broke the tedium which so often accompanies these lessons by a much loved repertoire of jokes, stories, mannerisms and other diversions. There must be few fields academic or extra curricula at Rendcomb to which Bill has not contributed, and they have been very varied - the church, bell ringing, games - especially hockey, the old Rendcombian society, and the gardens which he took over when the four gardeners - who among their duties used to dig the Estate Garden by hand - were redeployed. The improved appearance of the college gardens was a labour of love on his part costing him thousands of hours and the college little expense, but what a difference it has made over the years.

In these days of rapid educational change and more frequent staff turnover Rendcomb has indeed been lucky that Bill with his sterling qualities devoted his working life to the service of the school.

From **Bob Edy** (1959 - 67)

The September 1959 intake at Rendcomb numbered just five. In line with the Lee-Browne policy of keeping the school role at 91, John Dow, Fraser Glennie, Jeffery Harris, David Mabblerley and myself were admitted to replace the five students who had left in July. Two years on and this select group more-than-doubled in size as the new regime of Anthony Quick began to build-up the school numbers - and Bill White arrived to teach us Latin.

Thirteen-year-old students normally feel an obligation to test out a new teacher. We did our best but there was little change from Bill. The epithet "wretched" springs to mind but it was one he used for us rather than a comment on his situation! He very quickly made his mark as a well-organised and firm practitioner - punctual, precise and clear in his demands. Latin had experienced something of a lull in previous years, but here was somebody determined to put us through our paces. The room next to Saul's Hall became Bill's Room and his thunderous tones reverberated around the heart of the school. "De Bello Gallico" was duly mastered and GCE passes achieved.

Bill delivered his Latin - and indeed his English - with great panache, but it was evident then, and more so now in retrospect, that classroom work was a comparatively minor part of Bill's overall contribution. A small staff demanded all-rounders and as the "new boy" Bill seemed to be lumbered with everything. For two or three years until I managed to gain selection for 'first game', it was Bill who turned out in all weathers to put us through our paces with hockey stick or rugby ball. When campanology was revived in the Rendcomb tower, inevitably it was Bill who superintended - and participated vigorously, breaking a 'stay' on at least one occasion.

I cannot remember how I came to be on the gardening shift for Tuesday afternoon 'Public Work'. I must have offended somebody badly! What I do remember was that Bill was in charge and that, as in everything, he was

an enthusiast. It was always cold and I was always miserable - 'Wretched Edy' indeed. I do have to report an area of failure here - I never have taken to gardening. Bill wouldn't give up on me but my family have!

In my day, the Old Rectory was used to provide overflow dormitories for some junior students and a room in the attic housed a prefect and another sixth former. It was during my time in the sixth form that I spent a number of terms there under the supervision of Bill and John Tooze. When I think back to my school days it is often to the late-evening discussions with one of these two - the real stuff of school teaching - as they gently prodded me toward becoming a more acceptable member of the human community - lots of wisdom, lots of care, lots to reflect upon.

I have enjoyed keeping in touch with Bill in the thirty years since I left the college and like many others have valued his friendship and the link provided by the annual newsletters. Clearly his contribution to the school has been immense and, along with many generations of Rendcombians, I would like to wish him a happy and healthy retirement.



From **Roger Medill** (headmaster 1971-87)

I find it hard to imagine Rendcomb without Bill White, whom I have always regarded as a permanency. He is a member of what I believe to be an endangered species - the time honoured bachelor schoolmaster who outlasts the comings and goings of younger teachers, the arrival and departure of successive headmasters, and provides, amidst this flux, the strength of continuity and long service which every good school needs. Such a man as Bill White, without the demands and distractions of a family (though with keen and varied interests of his own) has offered the school an unrivalled commitment of time, energy and personality.

Bill brought to his teaching a deep knowledge and love of the classics, and his particular mixture of the serious and the humorous generated a lively response and excellent results. Nobody who heard his booming voice echoing from the front classroom could doubt that this ancient language, pronounced dead for a millenium, had regained new life and meaning, and classics in translation proved a popular option for sixth form girls as well as boys, a stimulating introduction to two of the world's greatest literatures. Finally, some teaching of French reflected his extensive knowledge of France and his affection for that country.

So much for some forty years as a dedicated teacher, but the term schoolmaster implies something more than teaching. Running a boarding house is a twenty four hour a day task, and the care of a hundred or so boys in Rendcomb's huge rambling mansion - albeit with the help of tutors - presented its own special problems. Fortunately, Bill had a natural authority which boys respected, and his firm structure of discipline was tempered by a liking for, and affinity with the young.

Almost as soon as I took over at Rendcomb, Jack Fell relinquished the post of second master on his retirement, and I appointed Bill in his place. I much appreciated his friendly advice and valued his organising ability. His presence and sound judgement exerted a strong influence over many aspects of the school's daily life. Here are a few examples.

Hockey, the most popular school game, was his main sporting interest and his enthusiastic coaching contributed much to the pleasure and success of numerous teams throughout the years. How he would have then appreciated the fine new all-weather field now under construction. The bridge club also thrived under his guidance, and skills acquired there will give enjoyment for a lifetime to former members. He was never short of volunteers to help in maintaining the gardens which complemented the school's magnificent setting and surroundings - an interest dear to his heart. In conclusion I would mention his close links with successive school chaplains and his management of a carefully chosen group of boys and girls as church wardens. His love of choral music and his deep awareness of the value of Christian conduct in a community ensured that services in Rendcomb's beautiful church were occasions respected even by the agnostic.

These brief comments cannot do full justice to a career so central to Rendcomb's well-being and success for so long. My feelings of gratitude and affection will be shared by all Bill's many colleagues and friends, and by generations of Rendcombians.

From **Vaughan Tredwell** (1982 - 89)

Salve Wilhamus Biancus!

There is no doubt that Bill White is central to many of the fondest memories of the school conjured by old Rendcombians of my era. In fact the thought of Rendcomb without him is a strange one indeed. I distinctly

remember looking forward to his lessons not because I had a burning passion for French or Latin but because I knew that forty minutes of entertainment and amusement was in store. The fact that I would be learning at the same time did not really cross my mind. Mr White treated the classroom as a stage and his performances were always first rate. The penalty for day dreaming was banishment to the imaginary play-pen in the Latin room and offenders also ran the risk of being subjected to the "Paddington hard stare". The mixture of disapproval, amusement and profound disbelief conjured into one five second burst of eye contact had legendary effects on a student's self esteem.

Much the same method was used to enforce the rules of the school. I cannot remember Mr White ever really losing his temper although I must have tested his patience to the absolute limit on several occasions. Indeed one could expect to be made to feel particularly immature by that rather special stare and a few well chosen words delivered in superbly haughty tones.

It always infuriated my year that we knew nothing of his past. I am sure he rather enjoyed the speculation surrounding his history. It was only at the last OR. day that I discovered he had been an officer in the Royal Artillery. This would help to explain his legendary bush craft that was the bane of all trainee smokers and drinkers. If the stalking of naughty schoolboys ever becomes an Olympic sport we can look forward to Britain once again holding a respectable position on the medal table. A great deal of the reason behind this mysterious side is, I am sure, a product of his humility and genuine interest in other people. I know I am not alone in wishing he would stop taking German and Italian GCSEs and instead placate our curiosity by doing the decent thing and writing his memoirs.

Bill White's love for Rendcomb was obvious to all, not only from his dedication to his teaching and his interest in the OR. society but also his willingness to join in with music and drama and to support all school teams on the playing fields. It is also a sad fact that it is only really when one returns to the school having left that one realises quite how beautiful the grounds are as a result of Bills' tireless efforts.

Rendcomb without Wilhamus Biancus will be a very different place. Those future Rendcombians who will not experience the Latin room under his direction will be missing something very special. His style of teaching is unique as is his character and I hope for Rendcomb's sake that whilst strolling the grounds this summer he has a change of heart.

Somehow I doubt it but if somebody were to sneak a notebook and pen into his luggage perhaps he might be persuaded to start those memoirs.

From **John Tolputt** (headmaster 1987 -)

"One of the functions" said Bill, with his quelling look, "one of the functions of a second master is to tell the headmaster when he errs and strays". Anyone who knows Bill White will instantly hear the tone of voice and see the expression on his face. It is a voice and look which juniors love to imitate and which no one who has worked with Bill - or been taught by him - will ever be able to separate from their happiest memories of Rendcomb.

I have known Bill for only 10 years, less than a third of his total service to Rendcomb. I wish I were in a better position to describe in all its length and variety his unique contribution to the life of the college. He himself is a wonderful chronicler of other peoples' achievements, as shown recently for example, in his superb tributes to Kathleen James and Peter Sudbury. It is a gift he has of making sense for all of us of what makes Rendcomb and the lives lived in it special. Year after year, the leavers would have nobody but Bill speak at their final church service, out of deep respect and affection of course, but, I believe, for another reason too: an almost subconscious knowledge that Bill would know how to celebrate an important turning point, celebrate it in a way that would touch their hearts and give them a deepened sense of what really matters in their lives.

This is why I believe Bill is one of the few great teachers I have known, and possibly the greatest. Humour is part of it, of course. Bill is not only humorous in himself but the cause of humour in other people. I have felt almost witty during common room badinage with Bill, or in acting as stooge for one of his twinkling performances as reactionary buffer, or raging schoolmaster, or ancient gardener.

Then secondly there is anger. Sentences beginning "If, headmaster, you decide to abolish Latin..." or "The snooker table seems to have moved..." are like distant rumbles of thunder, and it is best to take cover.

Discourtesy, or arrogance, or wilful stupidity elicit from him that familiar expulsion of air and pucker of the lips. The least stuffy person I know, Bill had his dignity and knows when to stand on it.

The third part of Bill's quality is encouragement. Silly people he puts firmly back in their box, but people who need bringing out, or supporting, or helping, or gently teaching, will find in Bill a totally unselfish and companionable guide and mentor. I have found this myself (when not being put back in my box). His advice is direct and practical, never capricious, based on thought and experience, and totally without a hidden agenda.

When a Rendcombian, or a member of staff, needs him, he is there. Like so many of his pupils and colleagues, and the college itself, I owe him an incalculable debt.

To end. (and I have only just started) with just one of so many memories, and a completely personal one. On that dreadful day - founder's day - when we heard that our dear friend and chaplain, Peter Sudbury, had died

twenty minutes before the speeches, we were all bewildered and confused. What should we do? Bill had his own weight of grief to deal with, but within five minutes he slipped into my hand a prayer he had written. I was able to read it out to the shocked assembled company, and it was perfect.

From **Justine Platt** (1988 - 90)

It is hard to imagine the ever present Mr White no longer walking up and down the old Latin room, ushering the late comers into church and supporting every member of the school in their activities and interests. Often to be found tending his urns of geraniums on the terraces, Mr White is always ready to share his wit, dry sense of humour and the latest gossip.

The fact that Mr White is a friend of all who are involved with the school is demonstrated by the huge number of OR's with whom he is in frequent correspondence. He has been a very important link between the school today and OR's, keeping us all up to date with the latest happenings. It remains a mystery to me how on earth he remembers all our names, let alone our family history and interests.

He is a wonderful story teller, often entertaining us with tales of days gone by at Rendcomb and the escapades of our predecessors. I remember myself and Mr White frequently being told off during OR. committee meetings for talking about who was currently with whom.

I never attended one of Mr White's lessons yet he was one of the people at Rendcomb from whom I gained and learnt the most. I wish him a very happy retirement walking the Cotswolds and beyond.

From an U14 Hockey captain (1985 - 92)

When asked to write a little piece about WJDW for publication in the newsletter, I was a little daunted. It had been a long time since I had written anything except abbreviated notes. Where was I to start?

The WJDW immaculate blackboard script and faultless Latin lessons? The WJDW that makes sure Rendcomb is always in bloom, and that the puffs of smoke rising from behind the shrubbery are quickly dealt with? The "arch co-ordinator", WJDW who helped to make Rendcomb's 75th anniversary the great success it was? or the WJDW handling of a verbose and overly competitive U14A hockey captain?

Whatever the memories of Bill White from Rendcomb, one theme spans them all. The effortless charm and good grace; the utter integrity which commands respect no matter what the company or occasion and the ability to accomplish even the most demanding tasks unruffled and unperturbed.

I would just like to register my own thanks to Bill for all the wonderful teaching and guidance he gave me. Whilst at times I gave him every reason to be far from grunted he was never disgruntled - apologies Mr Wodehouse, many thanks Bill.

As to the identity of that U14A hockey captain....

C.C. Burden

Nothing could have illustrated better Colin's dedication to his profession than the outstanding craft exhibition which he organised in 1995. It epitomised his love for fine craftsmanship, his pride in Rendcombians' achievements in this field and his personal expertise in helping them to achieve their goals. For the past 34 years Colin has strongly upheld Rendcomb's tradition of woodworking skills and has devoted hours of his time to developing these in his pupils. The pleasure and satisfaction this derived is illustrated in the tributes below. Although it is difficult to believe, the woodwork department has never been more than part of Colin's job. In his early days he ran the P.E. (how many of you remember those "non-swimmers" periods or the gold survival tests?) and also taught junior English. Then in the 70's he developed geography into a G.C.E. course, laying the foundation for it to become an 'A' level subject. His meticulously planned and sympathetic teaching was much appreciated by his geography students. Throughout his time here Colin has devoted many hours to coaching rugby and cricket teams, finally running cricket himself. It is not always realised what a sacrifice young schoolmasters make in spending their Saturday with a school team rather than in playing for a club - as I know Colin would have liked to do. He also ran the judo after Keith Thorne died.

I always considered myself most fortunate to have Colin as my deputy when I was running the main building. His reliability, understanding and high standards made my job very much easier, and I know these qualities were also appreciated by those who were in his tutor groups. We were all delighted when Colin and Dorothy were married and are pleased that Frances and Richard will be continuing his long connection with Rendcomb. We send them all the society's best wishes for the future.

W.J.D.W.

The following tributes illustrate the respect and appreciation in which Colin is held.

From **Kevin Holmes** (1983 - 90)

During my time at Rendcomb there was always one thing that you could rely upon: the woodwork department would be open between the hours of 2.00 p.m. and 3.30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. This was due entirely to the efforts of one man, Colin Burden. Whether it was a first year fumbling about with a cassette rack or an eager pupil from the upper sixth trying to finish his pedestal desk, Colin would always give his time and expertise to help. This was especially apparent towards the end of term when everyone in the workshop was in a frantic panic trying to finish their 'job' so they could take it home for the holiday, during which Colin would remain unerringly calm. I would like to thank Colin personally for his expert advice and guidance without which some of the furniture that I made during my years at Rendcomb would have been better suited as firewood! During the mid 1980's the workshop diversified with the evolution of more 'modern' materials and as a result the opportunity of gaining a highly prized G.C.S.E. in craft design and technology emerged. Plastic became as popular as wood and there were not many Rendcombians who left without a pencil holder made of three polyethylene tubes stuck together to their name.

The extent of Colin's work was always apparent at the woodwork department's annual exhibition in the Dulverton Hall on founder's day. This was always one of the highlights of the Rendcomb year and was a time for Colin to be proud of seeing the skills and techniques that he had 'chiselled' into his pupils put into practice. This culminated in the craft exhibition that he organised in October 1995 which celebrated 75 years of woodwork at Rendcomb. Colin spent several weeks of his own time gathering furniture from all round the Cotswolds, carefully marking what belonged to whom and then finally arranging the items into a stunning display that was enjoyed by both those connected with Rendcomb as well as the general public. Let us hope that this tradition is carried on strongly into the next millenium so that we will be able to hook back on 100 years of craft made in the workshop.

Although the woodwork department was his major interest, Colin still had time to be involved with many other aspects of Rendcomb life. As well as his role in the geography department, he was deeply involved with sport. He provided the kick-start to many Rendcombians rugby career by coaching the under 15s. In the summer he took the U15A cricket XI and during my last two years he held the position of master in charge of cricket. As a result the great game flourished with improved fixtures and results but unfortunately not the weather (this must have been beyond even Colin's meteorological skills!).

Above all, though, Colin will be remembered for the tremendous commitment and tireless effort he put into his work at Rendcomb, particularly in running the woodwork department. I would like to wish him all the best for the future in whatever he chooses to do, although I have a sneaking suspicion that a coping saw or mortice gauge will never be too far away from his side.

(Kevin Holmes works for Chemical Design in Chipping Norton. His rôle is customer support for chemical software products. He is also captain of Broadway Cricket Club and is a special constable in the volunteer police service.)



From **Graham Jordan**

I attended Rendcomb College from 1966 until 1973 and much of my delight during these years was spent in the woodwork rooms. Colin Burden was the woodwork master during this time and it was due to his continual encouragement that my enthusiasm grew and grew, so much at times that I would be in the 'Manole' as the woodwork rooms were called at 5.00 am. Mr Burden taught us the finer side of woodwork, from the basics of producing a square piece of wood from a rough twisted slab, to the exacting details of completed joints, and although this could often be frustrating, through the personal cheery approach by Mr Burden I learnt the great joys of furniture making. Also, inspired by his interest in antiques, I was able to make quite a little business for myself of mending and restoring, which has kept me afloat through many a lean time. My 13 year old daughter has recently made herself a set of bookshelves, and she was keen to use the methods I learnt, mortice and tenons for joints, finishing with many layers of French polish. So due to Colin Burden's teaching methods there are many quality pieces

of woodwork which will become antiques, and it has given me the confidence to build and fit out the houses that I've built. Also his careful explanation of different timbers inspired me to go into the forest of the world and to spend a good deal of my life planting trees.

Mr Burden also took us for physical education and sport, and I can remember him running around as much as he expected us to. Teaching by example is such a good motto to remember.

My memories of the school days at Rendcomb remain a strong experience of intimacy and companionship and these are largely due to the personal caring attitude such as Mr Burden developed between us. With so many thanks and respect.

(Graham Jordan lives in Australia. He builds rock walls for a living and is also much involved in reforestation and regeneration of the rain forest - and growing enough bananas!)

From **Polly Parsons** (1992 - 94)

A girl doing woodwork! Most woodwork teachers would have had a fit, but not Mr Burden. He coped with my ham-fistedness and always had plasters ready and sympathy for yet another black nail! The result was that I made a box - which even appeared in "Woodwork Weekly"! I absolutely loved my time in the woodwork room. Thank you very much, Mr Burden, for your help. I hope you have lots of time to make the things you want to make.

(Polly Parsons is in Dublin studying fashion design).

From **Richard Funnell** (1973-80)

Ex Rendcombians whose woodworking exploits never extended beyond a cheese board and a bedside lamp will also remember Colin Burden. Throughout most of the 1970s he was the sole geography teacher at Rendcomb. Whenever possible, Colin related his teaching to the county and especially the area surrounding the school. He often used examples of physical features or uses of the land which we would walk past nearly every day. This sparked interest in his pupils as the subject became alive. I am sure there are many ex pupils who see, from time to time, a set of interlocking spurs or a hanging valley and remember their geography lessons with a smile.

(Richard Funnell is a quality assurance auditor with Glaxo Wellcome involving world-wide travel)

From **Patrick Lorenzen** (1973-80)

The prospect of writing a few lines about Colin Burden set me thinking initially of many happy hours spent whittling away in the workshop. My first memories, however, of C.C.B. are of 1973 from one scrutinising the, then ancient, black and white school pictures outside the German room and commenting on how little he had changed in the preceding years. Hence it is somewhat surprising to hear that the up and coming junior master is now about to retire!

It is, of course, for woodwork which most old Rendcombians will remember Colin Burden. His style of teaching, coaching perhaps, was very much "laissez-faire" with practice being gained by making useful items from the outset. The atmosphere in the workshop, whether it be Sunday morning or Monday afternoon, may have been relaxed but standards certainly were not, with material costs, tool care, quality and safety all rigorously controlled. Often the "enterprise culture" was fostered with pupils being apprenticed to the antiques business and enlisted to unload the latest refurbishment project!

One may recollect, in particular, the sharp dovetails or the sharp wit but none of us will forget the Rendcomb era in which he played such a continuous role.

(Patrick Lorenzen is an agricultural contractor hiring out machinery to local farms and estates)

From **Hamish Auld** (1985-92)

The absence of Mr Burden in the Rendcomb community will be much noticed. He put a lot of time and commitment into the woodwork department helping pupils to create fabulous pieces from the angle-poise lamps to masterpieces like a desk by Kevin Holmes or a walnut tip-top table by John Shaw. Mr Burden always managed to supply pupils with the best materials.

Geography was another subject which Mr Burden taught. I'm sure some pupils will never forget the field studies they did in Cheltenham with the help of Mr Burden's great local knowledge. He also played his part in coaching sports. My own memories are that of Mr Burden coaching us as a great rugby team in my middle years at Rendcomb which all added to the 1st XV's later successes.

Mr Burden also gave up time to help with many of the college's stage productions creating sets and props. With all these contributions to college life, I am sure Mr Burden will be missed and I wish him and his family

well for the future.

(Hamish Auld last year obtained an honours degree in furniture design at Buckinghamshire college, Brunel University)

Mr Frank Fry



Frank (centre) receiving his war medals from General Sir Michael Rose on founder's day 1996

After over 40 years of loyal and much valued service as one of the college ground staff, Mr Fry has decided to retire (at the young age of 82) and move up to Scotland to be with his son's family. He will be much missed in the village and at the college. The society sends him its best wishes for the future.

Mr and Mrs M J Newby

Mike Newby joined the staff in 1978 to replace Brian Hembry as head of PE and assistant in the biology department. He immediately impressed pupils of all ages with his passion for all sport, especially rugby, and with his expert coaching at all levels. The old gym, in what is now the Dulverton Hall, had been inadequate for years, if not a real danger, and PE classes assumed a very different form when the sports hall was built under Mike's guidance.

Gradually Mike became increasingly involved in the running of the Duke of Edinburgh award programme developed by John Willson. The enjoyment derived from expeditions was due to Mike's love of outdoor activity and real ability to strike the right note of firmness combined with informality. With his wife, Joan, he was also much involved in the pastoral side - firstly in the Stable Block with the third form dormitory, then with Godman House and finally as housemaster of Lawn House from 1989. For her part, Joan, apart from the help she gave Mike in the boarding houses, developed a domestic science course from humble beginnings in the kitchen of No. 1, when it was known simply as 'cooking', to the high-tech laboratory for food and nutrition that we have to-day. Her expert tuition resulted in some splendid D of E tea parties - and of course fine results in the City & Guilds examinations. In addition, she spent many hours coaching girls' sport.

Mike and Joan have made a great contribution to Rendcomb as can perhaps be seen from the following tributes. We wish them well for their life at Bedstone School, where Mike has been deputy head since September 1996.

W.J.D.W.

From **Peter Grimsdale** (1985 - 90)

When I was first asked by Bill White to write a tribute to Mike Newby, the first thought that sprang to mind was a picture of Mike and his 'sidekick' Chris King striding along the path that ran between the new Lawn House and the old rectory. Mike could be seen taking one pace to every three Chris managed! The amazing thing was whilst taking these huge strides Mike never seemed to be extending himself beyond his natural control. Images of people often best describe them, and I believe this is a case in point. Throughout the time that I have known Mike, I could aptly describe him as bold and extrovert, yet subtle in the manner which he approached many of the everyday situations that confronted him at Rendcomb.

My first memories of Mike at Rendcomb can be traced back to the depths of the biology labs and the open expanse of the sports hall. Here was a man that one minute had the class captivated by his assessment of how England had fared in the previous weekend's five nations championship game, and within the hour he would be refereeing a hotly contested basketball game in the sports hall! This was one of Mike's great fortes, being able to adapt to both the situation and those around him. Many of the years to have passed through

Rendcomb's biology labs can only have benefited from the enthusiastic manner in which Mike approached his teaching. Many will have joked about the animated manner in which he portrayed the subject, arms waving in an often 'David Bellamy' like fashion, but it was this approach that often penetrated the dark depths of the student's brain and made recall of an all important fact far easier during a summer exam or during the dreaded Saturday morning test.

If Mike could be described as enthusiastic about biology, it would be hard to find the correct words to convey the way that he approached the running of PE and rugby at Rendcomb. PE was always a favourite subject of mine, as I am sure it was for many others, a chance during the week to finally let off some steam and charge around the sports hall for double period. PE however, can be the feared subject of the week for those with little or no interest in sport. Mike in his unique way managed to eliminate this fear and make the subject a fun time for everyone. Never can I remember the person being left on the side, not being able to participate because nobody wanted him in their team. Mike was always there to encourage and nurture the 'closet' sportsmen, and sportswomen alike when PE became sports science in the senior years. I saw many of my peers develop into fine sportsmen under Mike's guidance, and success in rugby at Rendcomb in the last few years can be attributed to the hard work and time that Mike dedicated to the sport that was perhaps his first love. Never one to criticise, only encourage, the energy that Mike put into the running of rugby at Rendcomb was admired by fellow staff, parents and pupils alike and it is largely down to him that Rendcomb enjoys the exhaustive fixture list, at all levels, that it enjoys today.

If rugby gave Mike his greatest enjoyment at Rendcomb, then his greatest achievement would have to be the way he established Lawn House, one of the new boarding houses that appeared during the late eighties, in order to cope with the transition Rendcomb was undergoing to take it forward through the nineties and into the next century. Mike had a year to learn the ropes as a housemaster, taking control of Godman House. Judging by the way that he dealt with many of the problems that arose in the first few months in Lawn House, he obviously had learnt well and had the natural aptitude required of a housemaster. He was always firm yet fair, but also recognised the need to allow the senior boys the freedom to take responsibility for the running of the boarding house. This in turn enhanced the respect that all members of the house had for Mike. The juniors of the house always knew where they stood and, whilst he was never really seen to 'tread the corridors' in a blind rage, they all knew that Mike was a man to have tending your corner, not coaching in the opposite one!

Within a very short time of the first influx of boys into Lawn House, Mike had established an air of quiet authority, whilst remaining the person boys would turn to if problems did arise. His success in the running of the house meant that the unique feeling that the house really was a home away from home, was established. "Every successful manager always has a good back-room staff". Apply this sporting analogy to a housemaster and the result may read, "every successful housemaster always has a supportive wife". This was perhaps one of the reasons that the first year of Lawn House ran so smoothly. Joan was always on hand to support Mike and took an active role in the running of the house. It would be unfair not to mention the contribution she made to the well oiled machine that was the Newby household. With David and Sarah often found running around the corridors of the house at the weekends the family atmosphere was completed. Any prospective parent would only have had to see the way in which Mike and Joan treated their children to know Rendcomb was a place they could happily send their child.

Finally on a personal note, I would like to thank Mike and Joan for all the support and encouragement they offered during what was a difficult final year for me at Rendcomb. I am sure all the old Rendcombians that passed through Rendcomb during the Newby era will join with me in wishing Mike every success in his new post as deputy headmaster of Bedstone School. and every happiness to his family for the future.

(Peter Grimsdale works for the American company EDS, developing a new computer system for the Inland Revenue).

From **Michael Uglow** (1979 - 84)

"Tackle, Tackle" he boomed out across the pitch, his cupped hands moulded to the lines of his face. His commitment to the mud-covered charges running around in front of him was unquestionable, the enthusiasm simply poured out. "Newbs" put 110% into everything that he did, whether it was encouraging the 1st XV or explaining the finer details of the biology syllabus. His dedication to the job was never failing and there is no doubt that Rendcomb will miss Mike Newby dearly.

Mike arrived at Rendcomb in 1978 and took over as head of PE and also taught junior biology. He strolled into our first PE lesson in that tracksuit which was to become his trademark (I think he had a new one occasionally!). He made quite an impression on the pre-pubescent 12 year olds that lounged bedraggled in front of him. His 6'4" frame (so he claims) towered over us and my first thought, being the tallest in the class at that time, was that I wanted to be taller! We soon realised that the imposing figure before us was that of a man who was relaxed in manner but always in control.

Mike's style was friendly, allowing pupils to enjoy their activities whether in the classroom or the sports hall. He never lost the upper hand however and his ability to inform someone that their behaviour was not up to

scratch, or their work below par, in a manner that did not offend or cause hurt was an impressive attribute. He earned his pupils' respect but never demanded it. He taught biology in a way that kept the pressure on without



overwhelming us and with that ever present sense of humour. In this way he guided many Rendcombians to success at 'O' level and gave the platform for many to go on further to 'A' levels.

Mike will probably be best remembered for his work in developing rugby at Rendcomb. He coached the 1st XV for many seasons before taking on the developing players at the under 15 level. The biggest obstacle in his way to achieving really great things was totally out of his control - the size of the school. Despite our limited numbers there has been a string of notable victories year in year out. We may not have been able to take on the Cheltenham or Marlboroughs of the world at 1st XV level but the Bloxhams and Dauntseys of the game were frequently beaten. In the latter years he developed the team into a rugby club and even started overseas tours. Pre-season training was one of the more unpleasant additions to the term and the sight of 'Jock' yelling at us to run up the dreaded hill yet again will stay with me for some time! The sessions were always well organised and conducted with that ever present light hearted approach which made them so worthwhile. His commitment to the team never failed throughout each season and I will always remember him marching up and down the touch line in his wellies booming out encouragement through those cupped hands.

In addition to his teaching duties Mike was a housemaster to many of the pupils going through Rendcomb and in this respect has been more than ably assisted in his duties by his wife Joan. They started in the stable block and after a spell living in the village moved into Godman House, and then on to take charge of the new Lawn House. Their relaxed attitude made those in their charge at ease but the ability to be firm when required ensured that discipline was not lacking. Their warmth and friendliness made the Newby's approachable and any advice was always considered and reassuring. This ensured that all those staying under their care had a relaxed and enjoyable house in which to stay. That sense of fun was never far awayhow many night time fire practices did we have at the stable block?!

Joan also had plenty of input into Rendcomb besides that of housemistress! Many wonderful aromas emanated from the kitchen of No. 1 (as it was before Godman House) during Joan's cookery classes and many a prying 3rd year had to be removed from the window. For many years Joan drove the minibus to church in Cirencester which helped many pupils, not to mention the savings on the Alexcars bill! I was honoured to be invited by Bill White to write this script as I consider Mike to be more than just one of my teachers but also a friend. He always set an example to follow and guided me and many other Rendcombians not only academically but in developing attitudes that set us up to approach the world at large. As one gets a little older the realisation dawns that there are not enough really top people who have simply got what it takes to excel at their work and in their private lives. ...Mike and Joan have. I am sure that I speak for many in wishing Mike and Joan the very best at Bedstone and I am sure the same level of commitment and enthusiasm will be enjoyed there as it was at Rendcomb but it is undoubtedly Rendcomb's loss that they are leaving.

(Mike Uglow is a registrar in orthopaedic surgery in the Wessex region).

From **Alister Harris** (1989 - 96)

I have been asked to write about a man known to many of us as "Jock". I was the prefect in charge of Lawn

House in his last year as housemaster. Mr Newby's way of running a boarding house was rather unique; his presence was always felt, yet he was hardly ever seen. I think he would like us to think he was teaching the senior pupils responsibility. However, what he taught me was the art of delegation - it made my life a lot easier. but I do not know about the poor students who had to do my work! His relaxed attitude made life in the house a lot more pleasant, many thought this was because he was disorganised and forgetful, but we all knew that this was not true. He was always able to deal effectively with problems when they arose and this earned him great respect. The respect was not just isolated in the house - he was liked throughout the school. In the seven years that I was at the school, he did not change, apart from thinning hair! I cannot remember much about my first years at school, he was just that tall bloke who ordered you around in the sports hall, 'up top', and in the boarding house saying "Hey, hey, hey, what d'ya think you're doing!" in the way that only he does and which every pupil tried to copy. Rendcomb has let a great teacher get away, but more importantly, they have lost a great personality, who for me was a major part of the spirit of Rendcomb.

(Alister Harris is at the University of Bath, reading Chemistry and Management).

Russell Riste

Regular guests of the reunion buffets will, this year, miss the cheery face of Russell Riste. Russell has moved on to pastures new after nearly five years at the sharp end of catering at Rendcomb. It has been thanks to his management that year after year OR's have been able to enjoy an excellent repast of a wide range of mouth-watering dishes. Russell, too, was the mainstay behind the scenes at the 75th anniversary ball. When those organising the bar failed to serve the sherry, Russell and his team stepped in. It was his genius which placed the food station outside on the terrace on that lovely evening, so there was more room in the marquee. And at the end of the evening when others failed to clear away the tables, once again it was Russell and his team who filled the breach. He worked tirelessly that evening and all through the night only to start again on the Monday when the summer school moved in. Rendcomb has been very fortunate to benefit from Russell's dedication and hard work over the years and we wish him well in his new post.



P.S. I still have a blue and gold bow tie left after the ball if anyone is missing one.
Jane Gunner

Old Rendcombiants' War Service (1939 - 45)

The following material is the result of the recent researches by **Douglas Payne** (1940 - 48) and will be of interest to older OR's in particular. We would be grateful for any further information on this subject and in particular for any identification of Arthur A. Caley, whose name appears on the roll of honour in the library but about whom nothing further is known.

312 OR's had war service, the following awards were made:-

D.F.C.	Flt. Lieut. H.W. Bates
D.F.M.	Flt Lieut. B.J. Brooks
M.C.	Capt. J.E. Miller R.E.
C.de.G.	Capt. P.G. Dyke RA (Sgt. West. Som. Yeo.)
O.B.E.	R.G. Daubeny J.P.S.
D.F.C.	Wing Com. P. Elwell
D.S.O., D.F.C. & Bar	Sqdn. Ldr. D.D. Haig
D.F.C. & Bar	Sqdn. Ldr. V.D. Page
M.M.	Lieut. T.D. Wright R.M. and S. African Tank Regt.
C.B.E.	Major E. Hessing

In Memoriam

The following Rendcombiants were killed during, or immediately after, World War 2.

1. Lance-Bombardier Albert Raymond CURTIS (1926 - 33) was a gunner in the 2nd Regiment of the Royal Horse Artillery and he was killed in action on the 1st of December 1941, aged 27 years. He is buried in the Knightsbridge cemetery at Acroma in Libya.
2. Flying Officer George Kenneth NOBLE, D.F.C. (1928 - 32), of 148 Sqdn, R.A.F., was reported missing, believed killed in action, aged 25 years, following an operational flight over Italy, on January 12th 1941. He is buried in Catania war cemetery in Sicily, and is described in official records as a Lance Corporal. However he would not have been awarded the D.F.C. unless he held substantive rank as an officer at the time of the award and squadron records indicate that he was the pilot of a Wellington bomber which took off from Malta to bomb Catania, and that he was a pilot officer at the time.
3. Pilot Officer John Graham YOUNG, aged 29 years, who had been a member of the teaching staff, was reported missing, believed killed, following an operational flight over the English Channel. on September 22nd 1942, when serving with coastal command as a pilot in 125 Squadron R.A.F.V.R. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede memorial.
4. Corporal Donald Albert James Keough RICHARDS (1929 - 34), aged 23 years, a member of the 44th Royal Tank Regiment, R.A.C., was killed in action, in Egypt, on May 31st 1942. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Alamein Memorial in Egypt.
5. Flying Officer John Frederick SPENCER (1933 - 40), an air bomber in a Wellington aeroplane with 428 Squadron R.C.A.F., was shot down on a raid over Bochum, Germany, on March 29th 1943. He was aged 22 years and is buried in the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, at Cleves.
6. Sergeant John Robert GURDON (1935 - 38), was a wireless operator / air gunner with 166 squadron RAF., was killed in action on April 11th 1943 when his Wellington aeroplane was shot down over Beautor, France following a raid on Frankfurt. He is buried in the Couvron et Aumencourt communal cemetery in France.
7. Trooper Denis William STONE (1933 - 38) was killed in action on July 18th 1944, aged 21 years, when serving as a tank driver with the 2nd Fife and Forfar Yeomany, R.A.C., during a fierce battle to capture hill 112, near Caen, as part of Operation Goodwood. He is buried in the Banneville la Compagne cemetery in France.
8. Lieutenant Trevor Desmond WRIGHT (1926 - 33), M.M. and bar, enlisted with the South African Armoured Brigade and was twice wounded. He was commissioned into the Royal marine commandos and was

killed in action on April 4th 1945, aged 27 years, during the assault on Walcheren island in the Netherlands, and he is buried in the Reichswald war cemetery at Cleves.

9. W. Alan WYON (1933 - 40), his grave is not listed by the War Graves Commission but he was a casualty of the war. He was a doctor of medicine serving with a Friends Ambulance Unit attached to the Spears' commission and he was killed on active service on May 25th 1945. He is buried in Beirut.

10. Lance Corporal Anthony F. HARRISON (1940 - 43), a national serviceman serving with the 15th/19th Hussars, was killed by the accidental discharge of a rifle when doing sentry duty on January 8th 1947(?). He is buried in the Ramleh War cemetery in Israel.

11. Warrant Officer William John Boulton WHALL (1932 - 36), was fatally wounded during an armed insurrection, by natives, in Egypt, and he is buried in the Egyptian war cemetery at Fayid. He was 27 years of age.

12. Flight Lieutenant Roger Claude Vaughan WATERS (1926 - 33), flew with 47 squadron R.A.F. He was posted missing, believed killed, on May 15th 1945. He has no known grave. He is commemorated on a Singapore war memorial.

13. Sergeant Arthur Ashton CALEY (dates unknown), was posted missing, believed killed in action, on June 25th 1943, when serving with 7 Squadron R.A.F.V.R., and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Runnymede memorial.

14. Pilot Officer John Russell HARMER (1937-42), was an Air Gunner who had almost completed a tour of operations with 78 Squadron R.A.F.V.R. when his Halifax aeroplane was attacked by enemy aircraft and set on fire over northern France when returning from a raid on flying bomb sites near Acquet, in the Pas de Calais area, on July 19th 1944. He baled out, but drowned in the Somme estuary together with two other members of the crew. His death was the more tragic because ultimately the aircraft crash landed on English shores. He was 20 years old. He is buried in the Etaples military cemetery in France.

15. Major Reginald M. INGLETON (1930-36), Royal marines, rose from the ranks. There are two versions of his tragic death. The official version states that he was attached to an Australian commando unit which was sent on a long and perilous undercover voyage to blow up shipping in Singapore harbour, as part of Operation Tiger. Although the operation achieved its objective, the party was captured and imprisoned in Changi gaol. They were tried by a Japanese court martial, found guilty of subversion, and executed according to the Japanese military code and ritual, in July 1945, after 9 months in prison. A more recent, unofficial but researched Australian version, states that Operation Tiger was an unsuccessful attempt to repeat an initial successful raid on Singapore harbour, but was ill advised and ill prepared. The party was betrayed by islanders fearful of reprisal, and was imprisoned in Changi gaol. The court martial was a travesty of justice and the subsequent executions were not carried out according to the Japanese military code. The men were butchered by guards at the whim of a Japanese field officer who ought to have been indicted as a war criminal. Before his untimely end, John Harmer was a newspaper reported who had literary gifts and aspirations. Not long before he died he wrote a prescient poem which was published in the "Observer" newspaper. It reads:-

Had I but time and heart, then I am sure
I could at last win to that distant hill
Where those who climbed its crag, no more endure
But dying, live in faith death cannot kill.
These, by their wit, escaped the touch of death;
Their laurels fade not, nor their glories change:
Mine be the task, while yet I draw my breath,
To find the frosty foothills of the range.
And if I never reach that topmost height,
If all my strength and spirit sink too low,
Or all too soon falls everlasting night,
Then brush away my footsteps in the snow;
For they are nearly great who die unknown
Rather than reap a harvest badly sown.

D.J.P.

More Rendcombiana

From **Timothy Gay** (1948 - 54)

I have been meaning to write since reading the 1995 newsletter. I thought you, and others, might be interested to know a little more about the origins of the phrase "Jackson-Stops". (I do not remember the "Staff" part) which is used by D. de G. Sells in his song and defined by Paul Heppleston in the glossary. In 1953/54 David Vaisey and I were prefects. He was head boy and I was head of West House. As we were very good friends we shared the use of the small cabinet room on the first floor as a study. At that time it was surrounded by three senior dormitories. These are now classrooms I believe. Certainly we used one of them for the old scholars' meeting in the summer. "Jackson-Stops" (and staff) were estate agents in Cirencester. They carried large advertisements in the local press. To me it seemed such a strange and humorous combination of names that we started using it either as an exclamation using both words: "Jackson-Stops" or as in the song shortened to "Jackson" and used in a sentence as an adjective or adverb. I think it meant "the ultimate", "the extreme", "that which nothing else could exceed". Usually, as in the song, it meant very very good, but I think it was more the idea of something being the final "Stop(s)" that it all started from. David Vaisey says that I invented this usage. It is true that I did like inventing odd usages to make him laugh. I cannot remember exactly when it was first used. Certainly it came from our use of it and we had a large printout of the words "Jacksons-Stops" on that same cabinet door. We were both amazed that the usage of these names had remained part of the Rendcomb idiom for so long after we had left the college.

There was also a sign we invented. To make this sign properly you had to stand on one leg and then bend down forwards and sideways until your right hand nearly touched the ground. You then flicked your hand from side to side, quickly, with your palm downwards - I can still do this! Rather like an eccentric umpire signalling four runs. This sign meant that everything was "under control". The nearer the ground you did it the more under control things were. It was very useful, because being a sign, it could be used over a relatively large distance. For example from the top of the main stairs to the bottom, down Saul's Hall, or across the dining room. I think it was often used to indicate the result of a negotiation with the headmaster (D.W.L-B), but it could also be used to demonstrate the present state of one's feelings about the daily round: relationships, work load, prospect of happiness during the next few hours! It was only used for local situations and not a comment on the world outside Rendcomb. The "control", or possibly, the near lack of control one had over one's life could be indicated over a wide range, depending on how near to, or far from the ground the sign was made. This is of course schoolboy nonsense, and I may not have got it completely right, but it may amuse some or trigger memories in others.

Dr Ernest Neal: 85th Birthday Celebration

A number of Ernest Neal's former pupils from both Rendcomb and Taunton greatly enjoyed a luncheon celebration of his 85th birthday at Bedford on Saturday June 1st. An excellent buffet lunch in St Andrew's Church Hall, with smooth management of arrangements by David, Keith and Andrew Neal and their wives was followed by an opportunity to renew acquaintanceships informally in the afternoon sunshine in the nearby home and garden that Ernest and Betty share with David and his family.

Ernest and Betty Neal still keep a keen interest in "Eggy's" former pupils and have a warm relationship with many of them, as was evident from the attendance of their guests from different areas of Britain - and Rudy Hale from Germany. Ernest - E.G. - Neal, (hence his Rendcomb nickname of "Eggy", though not carried on to Taunton) taught and strengthened biology and natural sciences at Rendcomb from 1936- 1945. His memory of his interview by Denis Lee-Browne at a London restaurant includes his accurate identification of a cockroach in the soup! He began his life-time study of badgers and many other areas of nature at Rendcomb. He also helped in coaching and supervising games and directed the school's wartime horticultural work to augment limited food supplies. Their three sons were born at Rendcomb, where they had a family flat in the stables. Ernest went on to teach at Taunton school in 1945, where he became a housemaster and the deputy head, until his retirement in 1971. He continued his studies of the badger and other animals at Taunton and, after retirement, was able to follow up his varied ecological interests in the West Country and also in East Africa. His autobiography, "The Badger Man" was published in 1994 and gives an interesting account of his career, of which a warm and close family life was always a very important element.

Ten OR's and their spouses enjoyed the day with a larger number of OT's. The Neal family's upbringing in the natural sciences ensured the day's events were very well organised. An appreciative speech on Ernest's career, and the support he has always had from Betty and their family, was made by Professor John Ryland of Swansea's faculty of marine zoology, formerly taught by Ernest at Taunton. In his response Ernest welcomed all the guests and mentioned some who were unable to attend. These included his Rendcomb colleague, A.G.G. Richards ("Dickers" - physics and maths, who also had a family flat in the stables), "Topher" Lane and Derek Hill, whose illness or family illnesses, had prevented them from attending. "Dicky" Margetts also could

not attend.

The celebration was enjoyed by everyone. Ernest and Betty were wished many more happy and interesting years. The O.R.'s were: Maurice (1934 - 42) and Kathy Bullen, Michael (1941 - 47) and Hazel Butler, Donald (1939 - 45) and Nuala Grant, Gordon (Rud) Hale (1939 - 46), Michael (1939 - 45) and Liliias Jeffries, Ted (1940 - 48) and Doreen Jones, Ian (1939 - 46) and Joan Menzies, Douglas (1940 - 48) and Betty Payne, Trevor (1941 - 48) and Mary Morris, Roland (1939 - 46) and Jan Wood.

Ernest Neal would be delighted if other OR's who were in his biology VIth or knew him well (1936 - 45) would get in touch. His address is: 42 Park Avenue, Bedford, MK40 2NF. (Telephone: 01234 270415)

Ted Jones (1940 - 48)

John Tooze - snapshots of a human being

A personality that shone way way above his disabilities

A smile never far

An open door

A treating you as worth-y, especially when you didn't feel it

A listening ear

Never speaking down

Probably one of the most ideal school-masters of all, because he combined a gentle firmness with the ability to love - and to draw love out of - his charges

(---oh! and a brilliant pianist too.)

Paul Heppleston (1956 - 62)



John Tooze in the passenger seat

The Old Hall School

The headmaster of the Old Hall School is trying to update his records of past pupils. Perhaps any OR's who attended the school would like to contact him at: The Old Hall School, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire, TF1 2DN

College Photographs

Frank Dutton (1936 - 44) has written to suggest that OR's might be interested in obtaining copies of early college photographs. Chris Wood is prepared to see to this, using the photographs in our archives. Anyone interested is asked to contact him at the address given at the beginning of the newsletter. A small charge would be made.

Country Gentlemen's Association

Dear Sir

As an aftermath to its centenary, the Country Gentlemen's Association is continuing to celebrate in 1997 by offering special memberships, and we have devised a particular offer for old boys of public schools that I hope may be of interest to you. Our current annual subscription is £45, but if any of your old boys join the CGA from now until December 31st 1997, we will do the following: send each a complimentary canvas holdall with leather trimming (very useful as a sports bag or for weekends away) AND donate £15 of the £45 to your school for any current or future project (such as a new swimming pool or sports pavilion), scholarship fund or charitable purpose. We hope that you might feel this is a way of introducing ourselves (and the services of the association) to your old boys and, at the same time, providing a very tangible benefit to the school. Please feel free to publish this letter in your magazine. Alternatively, you might like the details in "article" form, in which case do let me know. I would also be delighted to receive your comment as to whether you feel the offer is a welcome one.

Yours faithfully,
T.A. New
Managing Director

O.R. Sport

Cricket, school v. old Rendcombians, June 30th 1996

Scores: School 161, C. Barton 43, A. King 37, M. Hall 15, A. Taylor 16

C. Bannister: 4 wkts for 24, D. White: 4 wkts for 23

O.R.'s 156, R. Page 45 not out, J. Lutwyche 29, J. De Lisle Wells 18

A. Taylor: 4 wkts for 32, A. King: 4 wkts for 56

School won by 5 runs

O.R. Team: I. Thompson, J. De Lisle Wells, C. Bannister, P. Barry, R. Page, R. Witchell, R. Hutson, R. Reichwald, D. White, J. Lutwyche, A. Brealy (captain)

College batted first with Dan White and Colin Bannister opening the batting for the old boys, in half an hour the college were 14 runs for 5 wickets, Dan White taking four of the wickets to fall. His pace was too much for the batsmen with C. Webb and S. Maylett both getting ducks.

At this time Alex Brealy (captain) took White off fearing he would run through the college side, which allowed a very good stand of 78 minutes between Charlie Barton (43) and Adam King (37) before Barton was run out, but M. Hall 15, A. Taylor 16 and J. Gibbs 10 helped the college to get a total of 161 all out.

I. Thompson and P. Barry opened for the old boys, but they found runs hard to come by against A. Taylor and A. King, although John Lutwyche (29) and James de Lisle Wells (18) played well, the old boys lost wickets until they found their score at 114 for 9 at which point Dan White joined Roger Page. Both played very well with Page taking charge. The college looked like losing the game until Ashley Taylor bowled White for 10, leaving Page on 45 not out.

It was a very interesting game with the scores so close. Thanks to all the old boys who played and, next year, please get in touch early if you want to play.

D. Essenhigh

O.R. Rugby, 8th December 1996

The following were among the OR's who played:-

F. Ingham, S. Amey, N. Barton, P. Boydell, J. Morgan, C. Marcham, S. Roney, N. Carmichael, C. Carmichael, S. Jones, J. de Lisle Wells, A. Harris, L. Freeman, B. Marshall, G. Lawton, A. Payne, D. White, C. Hutton-Potts, A. Phelps, T. Brealy, P. Paterson-Fox, T. Paton, C. Acocks.

This year's OR rugby day saw a significant change from the traditional format. Given the increasing burden of regulations that govern the modern game, it has now become very difficult to stage a fixture between the 1st XV and an OR's rugby team even with the most stringent age constraints imposed upon the latter.

Consequently, we decided to stage a sevens tournament with teams made up of OR's and guests. On the day we felt that we just fell short of the numbers required for a viable competition. so instead we selected two fifteens for what proved to be an exciting contest characterised by expansive and positive rugby. The match

was refereed by MSG who provided, in his uniquely sympathetic way, an education into the laws of the modern game for older and not so old OR's. As a one-off it was generally agreed to be an unqualified success by players and spectators alike, and this was certainly borne out by the atmosphere in the post match festivities.

Nevertheless, it remains our intention to pursue the idea of a sevens tournament involving O.R.'s of all ages. For this to work in 1997, an element of forward planning is required! If you would like to participate please contact me as soon as possible; either to tell me that you intend to enter a team made up of O.R.'s (& guests if you wish) or that you wish to be involved as an individual (so that I can allocate you to a team) - Tel: 01285 831712.

Michael Slark

O.R. Hockey, 16 March 1997

This proved to be one of the best O.R. sports fixtures in recent years. The weather was superb, the pitches in excellent condition and there were five matches, all played in a good spirit and of a high standard of hockey. Special thanks are due to Phil Moore and Alex Brealy for the trouble he took in raising the hockey teams, to the staff and visiting umpires and to Bobby Morgan and Chris Wood for organising the drinks.

Teams and Results:

1st XI: A. Branston, S. Roney, T. Burns, C. Paine, P. Moore, M. Walters, J. Morgan, M. Moody, P. Morgan, C. Lawton, R. Sage

L 2 - 3

2nd XI: S. Jones, B. Renow-Clarke, A. Harris, S. Amey, P. Boydell, S. Croft, L. Freeman, C. Jarrett, J. Fairbank, I. Thompson, G. Hughes

D 0 - 0

3rd XI: M. Lynton, T. Brealy, P. Paterson-Fox, N. Paterson-Fox, D. Appleton, J. Hutton-Potts, A. Paton, A. Payne, C. Acocks, M. Cordeux, A. Phelps

D 2 - 2

4th XI: S. Hazell, C. Yardley, A. Topalian, R. Blackwell, A. Powell, V. Tredwell, C. Moody, A. Beales, R. Ogden, F. Ingham, G. Sommers

D 3 - 3

Ladies XI: from R. Renow-Clarke, K. Pearce, J. Pearce, B. Mann, B. Gee, K. Bagshawe, S. Lucas, B. Knightly -Browne, M. Preen, A. Duguid, G. Cawthorne, G. Buck, J. Phelps

L 0 - 2

School Hockey

Hockey players will be interested to know that an astroturf pitch on landage (below the stable block) is well on the way to completion. It will be a sand-filled type with a rubber shockpad which will also allow recreational tennis to be played in the summer and at least one of the OR. hockey matches in 1998 will be played on it. Hockey continues to be a popular sport allowing no less than fifteen boys' and girls' XI's to be fielded between September and March

C.J.W.

O.R. Shop

Tie in maroon or navy (griffin crests throughout) £5.00 p&p free

Sweat shirt in navy with woven "Old Rendcombian" badge £15.00+ £1.50 p&p

Rugby shirt in navy with red band and woven "OR" badge £29.50+ £1.50 p&p

These items are on sale at OR meetings or from Chris Wood at 9 Hammond Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos, GL54 3JF (Tel: 01451 860871). Cheques should be made payable to the old Rendcombian society.

Please state size required.

Limited edition print of Rendcomb College £40.00 + £1.50 p&p

For the 75th anniversary of the college, the society commissioned a water colour painting of the school by local artist, Stuart James. The original is on permanent display in the school and a signed limited edition (500) print, measuring approximately 24" x 14", may be purchased by sending a cheque for £41.50 (made payable to the old Rendcombian society) to C.J. Wood, 9 Hammond Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos GL54 3JF (Tel: 01451 860871). Your print will be sent in a strong 3" cardboard tube and the cost includes this and postage.

Thanks to the Society

We are pleased to publish the following letters:-

From John Holt: "Anne and I would like to thank the O.R. society very much for their generous gifts on the occasion of my retirement from the college. We would also like to thank those former pupils who sent letters and cards of good wishes. All of these were greatly appreciated."

From Lindsay Haslett: "Marie and I would very much like to thank the old Rendcombian society, for your generosity in giving us the wonderful print of Rendcomb and a cheque. We leave here with many happy memories and are anxious to assure you that we remain committed OR's ourselves now."

Old Rendcombian News

Richard Wooster (1982 - 87) has recently graduated from the University of the West of England with a B.A. (hons) in time base media. He is employed by Telewest Communications in the business services department.

David Vaisey (1947 - 54) has retired from his post as Bodley's librarian at Oxford. He preached at the morning service at St. Peter's, Rendcomb in March and he is a governor of the college.

Catherine Schallamach (née Faircloth, 1984 - 86) wrote from Hong Kong as follows:-

"After I left in 1986 and then retook my 'A' levels in Oxford, I spent the rest of the year until September '87 in Hong Kong and travelling in Asia. From 1987 to 1990 I was at the Polytechnic of Wales and graduated with L.LB in 1990. After that, a hectic year was spent at law school in Chester where I saw a lot of **Rob Draper** and also met my future husband. A great gang of us moved from Chester to London, and more specifically to Clapham. After doing some paralegal work, I did my articles with a small firm, concentrating on personal injury work. During my articles, I married Adam Schallamach from his home near Harrogate - we tried to obtain the archbishop's permission to be married at Rendcomb but without success. **Rob Draper, John Healey** and **Matt Cordeaux** came to the wedding, and of course my brother **Matthew** (now a doctor). After a fabulous honeymoon in Cuba, we settled into life in, yes!, Clapham. When I qualified, I moved into legal recruitment - brilliant fun. After a holiday in Australia in November 1995 we returned to find Adam had been successful in his interview with Baker, McKenzie for a job in Hong Kong. So here we are! I'm with a leading recruitment consultancy on the legal side. If anyone is out this way, please get in touch."

Anna Turner (née Wilkinson, 1980 - 82) works for "Landsman's Bookshop Ltd", near Bromyard. This is a specialist bookshop dealing in agricultural and horticultural books only. Anna and her husband live in Bromyard.

Josie Taylor (1978 - 80) writes: "After working for seven years in the City, I decided to leave the U.K. and forge an international career. I arrived in Shanghai by boat from Hong Kong in late summer 1993 and, becoming entranced by the city, decided to stay and work there for 2 1/2 years. I was very fortunate to arrive before McDonald's and at a time when there was only one 'ex-pat' watering hole in the city (with an atmosphere something akin to a students' union bar!). The changes I witnessed in Shanghai during my stay were astounding. A great deal of the fine western style turn of the century and art-deco architecture has been demolished as fly overs and shopping plazas are erected at a relentless pace. I have now joined ING Bank and after a spell in the Amsterdam head office, I start work in May in their Bangkok office.

Chris Wood (1982 - 89) has sent the following news of himself and his brother, Nick. "After leaving

Rendcomb I had pursued a career as an aeronautical engineer. I managed to graduate from the University of Hertfordshire, (formerly Hatfield Polytechnic, but with carpeted corridors) and in my industrial placement year I was selected to work as an air safety investigating engineer for British Airways, whom on my graduation compounded that mistake by selecting me on to their graduate training scheme. Three years of doing a variety of tasks that ranged from putting new sealant on the fuel tanks of Jumbo jets (from the inside) to conducting a passenger weight survey in Japan and generally enjoying myself in various overseas locations sees me with the slightly strange job of weighing aircraft - well, someone has to do it. Anybody who knew me at Rendcomb would remember my fascination with flying and up to last summer I had pursued this by getting my private pilots licence. Then in November 1995, BA advertised nationwide their requirement for candidates suitable for sponsorship to get their professional flying licences and become British Airways flight crew. After much testing and interviewing (and again further compounding their mistakes) they invited me to be one of the 100 candidates to be selected from several thousand applications. I am currently on unpaid leave from British Airways and am studying just down the road at the Oxford Air Training School. I have just 4 months left of a 13 month course and so far have flown 150 hours single engine light aircraft with journeys as far as Liverpool and Bournemouth. Rendcomb from the air is a marvellous sight to behold. Soon I shall be upgrading to a twin engined aircraft to learn flying along the commercial airways. This part of the training takes us to France, but we are still looking for a supermarché with an adjoining runway. In addition there are many ground exams and tests to complete - if that goes well, by October this year I shall be flying a big 'plane (!) out of Heathrow or Gatwick. It is a dream come true. My brother, **Nick** (1984 - 91) has also landed on his feet, he started at Bristol University, doing French and German. He felt distinctly disadvantaged by the fact that neither language was his mother tongue, unlike most of the others on the course. Reasoning that everybody is involved in history, he changed courses and successfully graduated. After some travelling around Europe and Africa, he decided that a plan to join the armed forces should be changed instead to one of making a killing in the city and he now works as a ship broker for a company called Clarksons. In effect he buys and sells ships - so if anybody is in the market for a second hand oil tanker, you know who to call. The company has offices around the world and an amount of globe trotting and serious socialising has occurred. I hope this has gone some way to bringing you up to date on what we have been doing over the last few years. I feel it is partly my duty to do so as I find the O.R.'s newsletter to be invaluable in keeping up with news from other OR's and the school. I was sorry to hear about the death of Rev. Sudbury and the departure of a number of teachers whom I remember from my days at Rendcomb. I sometimes wonder at what point will the school have changed so much that I don't recognise it as the same one that I attended - but that is always the price of progress."

From **Ted Jones** (1940 - 48):-

"On a visit to Kerry, in the west of Ireland, at the end of September 1996, I was pleased to meet **Basil Lumby** again. We had met at Rendcomb at the 75th anniversary ball weekend. He had been at Rendcomb from 1933 to 1939, and is the father of **Neil** (1968 - 73) who was a very active and positive chairman of the O.R. society during the anniversary celebrations. Basil now lives in the attractive Kerry countryside near Killorglin, where each summer at the Puck Fair, a wild mountain goat is crowned King Puck. On leaving Rendcomb in 1939 Basil volunteered for the navy but was not accepted because of deafness, so he went into farming in England. Later, after graduating from Seale-Hayne Agricultural College, he spent twenty-two years in Tanganyika and Tanzania, working in agriculture and fisheries development. In those days Neil had to travel from east Africa to attend Rendcomb. Although I didn't meet him - he was busy riding horses - another OR helped me to avoid total loss in my modest bets at the Lostowel Races, a seasonal highlight of that Kerry market town, my mother's birthplace. This was **Richard Dunwoody** (1975 - 81), who had several mounts over the four day event. Sadly, just as I had decided that his final mount would successfully recoup my earlier losses, I was sorry to hear the announcement that his horse had been withdrawn because of injury. I was impressed by the fervour and varied sartorial styles of the racegoers of both genders, but not by my cousin's (B.Sc.Econ) predictions! Listowel was overflowing with visitors - and their favourite refreshments - with standing room only at the hotels and bars. It was also the final period of the "Wren Men" competition of Irish songs and humour, sponsored by the generous Mr Guinness, whose products flowed freely. Despite that the crowded events were all very good humoured.

Greg Dorey (1967 - 73), with his wife Alison and three children, is now in Islamabad where he is the counsellor in the High Commission responsible for commercial, economic aid and information work.

Justine Platt (1988 - 90) will be working for an outdoor clothing company called L.L. Bean as an inventory buyer in Maine, U.S.A. from March 1997.

Richard Parsons (1986 - 91) wrote last May: "I was very sad to read of the death of Graham Bennett, or 'Lenny' as he was known to us at school. Although he was not in my actual year, I went on the Rendcomb

rugby tour of Canada with him in 1991. My thoughts go out to his family. I also read that Dr. Haslett is leaving to become deputy head at Wisbech Grammar School. He is an excellent teacher and a very kind and fair man, and I had the pleasure of having him as both French teacher and housemaster in the early days of 'School House'. I wish him all the best in his new post. As for myself, after a written test and several interviews, I joined G.C.H.Q. in Cheltenham on 8th August 1994. Life as a civil servant is not as easy as everyone makes out!! I thoroughly enjoy the work, and have made many new friends. In such a big establishment you get to meet different people very quickly! As yet I have met no old Rendcombians there...! On the social side I train very hard in a martial art called Wing Chun, training in Cheltenham and at our headquarters in Birmingham. I have been training for three years now, and it takes up a lot of my time. We are always busy travelling around giving self defence seminars and demos, in London and Milton Keynes. I am going to Hong Kong on 19th October this year for 10 days to train with the Chinese contingent there, and also do a lot of sightseeing. Alas, when Hong Kong is handed back next year, I will not be allowed to go there because of work.

From **James Cairns Terry** (1972 - 77)

Many thanks indeed for sending me the 75th anniversary edition of the old Rendcombian newsletter. I really enjoyed reading it and so many names mentioned brought back many half forgotten memories of Rendcomb. It is very hard to believe that it is nearly twenty years since I left. I will now attempt to tell you what I have done during those twenty years. After leaving Rendcomb, I spent a year working in Australia on what turned out to be a working holiday. I did intend to make a career in banking and was accepted for the Commonwealth Bank. One of the conditions of employment was that I had a resident permit. Due to the unemployment situation at the time, this was impossible to get. As I had a year's work permit, I decided to work for eight months in Sydney and then travel around Australia on the proceeds. This worked out well and I was able to visit several states including Queensland and Victoria where I was able to catch up with **Philip Faulks** (1970 - 76). The highlight of my trip was a sightseeing trip to Antarctica. This was a twelve hour non-stop flight from Sydney with two hours overflying most interesting parts of Antarctica. Within a few days I was in Coober Pedy, the opal mining town, a complete contrast. In November 1978, my visa expired and it was time to come home. I was then confronted with the question of what to do now. I thought of a career in cabinet making and organ building, but it was difficult to get accepted as an apprentice at the age of twenty. To this end I did several odd jobs including wheelwright, builder's assistant (on the Highnam Court restoration project under Roger Smith) and other similar jobs. In early 1980, I applied to the London branch of the Australian Commonwealth Bank and was accepted. I had a short but enjoyable time with them in London before being made redundant on the closure of their Strand offices. I returned to Gloucester then and worked in various branches of the Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society. I was with them for nine years. I worked in several branches including Gloucester, Cinderford, Tetbury and Ledbury. I was assistant manager of the Tewkesbury branch for five years and had a house there near the town centre. Since leaving Rendcomb I had a strong desire to learn the piano. To this end I had a fair size Bluthner Grand which took up most of the sitting room. The sitting room floor was made of stern stuff which was just as well because the piano must have weighed several hundredweight. As you may recall from my days at Rendcomb I was very interested in flying as was evidenced by the various model contraptions I used to let loose from the flying field there. Not being able to afford light aircraft lessons I became very much involved in the microlight movement. In the early days most microlights conformed to no legislation with regard to their structural integrity or the training of their pilots. With this in mind, I had some most interesting and enjoyable times, not to mention some rather unnerving experiences. It was often the temptation to fly into an old boys day but fortunately for other participants, the weather was never suitable for such a visit.

In June 1990 I left the C & G and attended an eighteen month commercial pilot's course at Cranfield. To pay for the course, I had to sell the house in Tewkesbury - the grand piano was found another home. My parents were kind enough to help with the cost of the course too, and for that I am eternally grateful. The theory element of the course was very heavy going to start with. It made me wish that I had paid more attention to Mr. Knapp's maths and Mr. Jackson's physics classes. I met many like-minded people on the course and we soon had our own study groups going. The flying element was fun and involved much 'Under the hood' instrument work. I finished the course in March 1992 and started to look for work as an airline pilot. The pilot shortage had by now turned into a huge surplus of unemployed pilots, many of whom had considerable experience. Several airlines had ceased trading including Air Europe, Dan Air and British Island Airways. With no immediate prospect of airline work on the horizon I turned my microlight flying hobby into a job. I qualified as a microlight flying instructor and spent the next four years instructing at Long Marston which is near Stratford. I thoroughly enjoyed the work. Students came in all shapes and sizes. One thing they all had in common was that, due to no fault of their own, they would try to kill you. Once this simple rule was observed, all mainly went smoothly. I have made many good friends through my days at Long Marston. I have given many people their first experience of a flight in a microlight including **Chris Pulford** (1970 - 77) and **Paul Maguire** (1971 - 77). In January 1997, at last I found an airline job. I am working with Newcastle based Gill Airways flying

domestic schedules to Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Belfast, Wick and Stansted. I have recently finished my line training and am flying the Shorts SD360 which is a 35 seat turboprop. Gill Airways also do night mail runs for the Post Office which involved flying between 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. As I grow more confident with the job I am really starting to enjoy it. I still have much to learn though. It has taken me a long time to pursue a career path of my choice. Many thanks again for sending me the newsletter and please accept my apologies for my delayed reply. I will of course continue to keep in touch with yourself and events at Rendcomb as I have many happy memories of my schooldays there. Thinking back, I am sure that I could never have been described as a model pupil.

From **Alan Bennett** (1969 - 76)

"I was at Rendcomb from 1969 to 1976. I still keep in occasional touch with **Pete Rundle** (1974 - 76) and to a lesser extent with **Phil Everatt** and **Toby Roberts** (both 1969 - 76). Toby told me that I missed last summer's 75th anniversary celebrations. By the sound of it there were quite a few of my era. Writing this makes me feel incredibly ancient, I can still remember reading about the old boys (there were hardly any "old girls" in my day). They all seemed light years back in the past then. I left Rendcomb in 1976 and went to Leeds University where I finished up with a degree in biochemistry and genetics. I then went to Leicester University for my PhD. After that I joined the biotechnology company Celltech where I worked for 7 years. For the past 6 years I have been conducting molecular biology research into the family of diseases that includes BSE (mad cow disease). I married my wife Jo in 1983 and we have a 6 year old daughter, Martha and a 3 year old son, William. Should anyone wish to contact me they can best reach my by email on: AlanBennett@BBSRC.ac.UK I recently had a very minor eye operation and was confined to bed for a weekend in the dark. Coincidentally, the talking book I listened to was "40 years on" by my namesake, the author Alan Bennett. Perhaps I should be thinking of organising a Rendcomb reunion for 2016. That seems light years away now but, as I've already discovered 20 years can pass before you realise it.

P.S. Those of you reading this who are not ancient "old boys" or "old girls", particularly those who have just done their GCSE physics, may have already commented that 'light years' are not a measure of time but are, of course, a measure of distance. If so well done! I can remember enjoying spotting similar errors. For all I know the book "Lord of the Flies" by William Golding is still an English literature set book. At the time I studied it I was also doing physics (only it was 'O' level then, GCSE's not having been invented). I wrote to the author suggesting that his work may have been a literary classic but optically speaking, it was flawed. I am still awaiting a reply. I have recently discovered a colleague at work who did the same as me, so if there are any students thinking of writing to Mr Golding could you please refrain as I am sure he has heard from quite enough from budding scientists and their ilk!"

From **Hamish Auld** (1985 - 92):-

"In July 1996 I graduated from Buckinghamshire College, a college of Brunel University with a BA (Hons) degree in furniture design. In November I left on a "round the world" trip, I spent a month in the U.S.A. travelling cross-state from New York to Los Angeles and then I came to New Zealand where I am currently staying. From what I've seen of the country so far it is magnificent with glorious landscape and the people are genuine. By the way there aren't too many sheep! Before the end of the year I will be travelling to Australia and possibly south east Asia, eventually returning to England.

On another matter I am glad to announce that **Marcus Head** (1988 - 92) is engaged to be married to Nicola Cole from Enstone, Oxfordshire in the summer of '98. May I take this opportunity to wish them all the best for the future.

News of Recent Leavers

Amey, Stephen A.	
Bagashawe, Katherine J.	Performers' diploma, Welsh College of Music & Drama
Bendall, Keith	Ancient history & classical archaeology, Warwick University
Blackwell, Oliver	Cirencester College
Bohlken, Charlotte G.	Arts therapies, Derby University
Carmichael, Nicholas	French, Exeter University
Chotitputsilp, Chaiwoot	Mechanical engineering, Manchester Metropolitan University
Clipson, Edmund	
Collier, Sophie	Wellington College
Davanzo, Anthony	
Duff, Lindsay F.C.	English, University College, London
Duhmke, Rudolf M.	Medicine, (Guy's or St Thomas'), United Medical & Dental Schools

Fairbank, James C.G.	Geology, Royal Holloway College, University of London
Fox, James	
Freeman, Leighton D.	Employment with Allied Dunbar
Frost, Ben	Cirencester College
Gee, Rebecca L.	HND business studies, Plymouth University
Gerry, Fenella	Westonbirt School
Harris, Alister	Chemistry & management, Bath University
Hart, Robert J.L.	Law & accountancy, Huddersfield University
Harvey, Suzannah	Employment
Heaven, William J.D.	English & philosophy, Bristol University
Holt, Nicholas	History of art & architecture, East Anglia University
Ismail, Oluseun (Seun)	Architecture, Westminster University
Jelfs, Jack	Philosophy & literature, Liverpool or Sussex University
Jensen, Anna	Retaking 'A' levels
Langlands, T. George	Returned to school - ill before 'A' levels. University in New Zealand
MacKinnon, Christopher F.	Biology, Royal Holloway, University of London
Mann, Bianca	Cirencester College
Marcham, Craig	Politics & society, Exeter University
Newcombe, Francis W.	Hotel & catering management, Dundee University
Nicholls, Luke B.R.	New media technology, Luton University
Pearce, Janet	Cirencester College
Pearce, Karen E.	Sport science, Kingston University
Perry, Charles	
Price, Philip J.	Marine geography, Cardiff University
Renow-Clarke, Benjamin	Journalism, Derby University
Renow-Clarke, Rowan	Cirencester College
Ridley, Nicholas	Cirencester College
Samranvanich, Wannachan	Computer systems engineering, Kent University
Simpkin, Adam C.	Business studies, North London University
Standley, Oliver	Cirencester College
Wellman, Larissa	Bloxham School
Winstone, Tony M.C.	Engineering foundation, University of West of England, Bristol
Witchell, Richard	Agriculture, Harper Adams Agricultural College