

# Old Rendcombian Society

## NEWSLETTER



**MAY 1999**

**25th ISSUE**

Editor  
W.J.D. WHITE

## Contents

Editorial	...	...	...	...	...	2
ORs on the Web	...	...	...	...	...	2
Dates of Future Reunions	...	...	...	...	...	2
Sports Contacts	...	...	...	...	...	2
Society Officers	...	...	...	...	...	3
Notice of AGM	...	...	...	...	...	3
Minutes of the 65th AGM	...	...	...	...	...	3
Summer Reunion 1998	...	...	...	...	...	4
Travel Bursary Report	...	...	...	...	...	5
Tribute to Mark Twyman	...	...	...	...	...	7
Acknowledgements	...	...	...	...	...	7
Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	8
Congratulations	...	...	...	...	...	12
Births	...	...	...	...	...	12
Marriages	...	...	...	...	...	12
John and Patta Tolputt	...	...	...	...	...	12
Dr Graham Smith	...	...	...	...	...	17
The New Headmaster	...	...	...	...	...	18
At Rendcomb	...	...	...	...	...	18
Summer Ball 2000	...	...	...	...	...	18
Rendcomb Reminiscences	...	...	...	...	...	19
The Lake	...	...	...	...	...	19
Rendcomb in the 1950s	...	...	...	...	...	21
Sport - O.R. Rugby	...	...	...	...	...	22
School Hockey	...	...	...	...	...	23
O.R. Hockey	...	...	...	...	...	23
O.R. News	...	...	...	...	...	23
News of Recent Leavers	...	...	...	...	...	26
Governors & Staff 1999	...	...	...	...	...	27

## **Old Rendcombian Newsletter**

In celebration of 25 years of the OR Newsletter we thought it appropriate to replace the crest on the front page with the shield from the college coat of arms. We thank Dr. Penrose Shackel for her help in making this possible.

## **Editorial**

"At the Society's A.G.M. last June, it was decided to send out an annual newsletter as the subscription to the society no longer covered the cost of circulating copies of the Rendcomb Chronicle to O.R.s. This letter is therefore something of an experiment, as it is difficult to decide what you would like to be included. So we hope you will send us your news, together with that of any O.R.'s whom you meet, and also let us know what items about the school or the society you would like to see in the next edition. Please remember that the success of this venture depends on you!"

Those were my opening paragraphs of the first newsletter in its new format sent out in April 1975. I little thought at the time that I would be privileged to write another editorial 25 years later and to have seen the experiment grow from a few laboriously produced foolscap sheets to its present impressive booklet. The success of the venture has of course been due to the fact that O.R.'s of all generations continue to send in news of all kinds every year and we know from comments received how much the newsletter is appreciated and enjoyed by members of the society. Although we have advanced far from the early Gestetner-typed editions and handwritten envelopes, the production of the newsletter is still a lengthy and time-consuming process which would be impossible without the dedicated work of Jane Gunner and her secretary Mary FitzGerald, who types out my long-hand script, Richard Gunner who transfers it to appropriate discs and Chris Wood who sees to the photographs and printing. We owe them all a deep debt of gratitude. With the continued support of O.R.'s and of the production team, I hope that the newsletter will continue to flourish for another 25 years!

## **O.R.'s on the Web**

If you would like to see the school's website which incorporates an O.R. page go to: <http://www.rendcomb.dircon.co.uk>. The O.R. page may be found by going through the 'whole community'.

## **Dates of Future Reunions & Sports Fixtures**

Sunday 4th July 1999	Cricket fixture Tennis fixture AGM - 12.00 noon Buffet lunch - 1.15 p.m. Supervised swimming available for families 12.30 - 2.30p.m.
Sunday 5th December 1999	Rugby fixture - 2.30 p.m. Ladies hockey fixture - 12.00 noon
Sunday 12th March 2000	Mens hockey fixture - 12.00 noon onwards Ladies netball fixture - 12.00 noon
Sunday 2nd July 2000	Cricket fixture Tennis fixture AGM Teas will be available in the pavilion but there will be no buffet lunch
Saturday 8th July 2000	Rendcomb summer ball

## **Sports Contacts**

Please ring well in advance if you wish to play, referee or umpire in any of the fixtures.

Rugby:	Mike Slark 01285 831712
Ladies hockey:	Chris Wood 01451 860871 (H) 01285 831383 (W) <a href="mailto:chriswood99@btinternet.com">chriswood99@btinternet.com</a>
Mens hockey:	Alex Breal 01242 517668 (H) 01285 831383 (W)
Ladies netball:	Sandy Westhead 01453 883235 (H) 01285 831383 (W)
Cricket:	David Essenhigh 01285 831295 (H) 01285 831874 (W)
Tennis:	Steven Croft 01285 860753, Peter Croft 01285 860753

## **Society Officers 1998-99**

At the annual general meeting in June 1998, 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, GLS4 3JF Tel: 01451 860871
Committee members:	Douglas Payne (1940 - 48) Simon Wormleighton (1968 - 75) Neil Lumby (1968 - 73) Alex Brealy (1980 - 87; staff 94 -)
Hon. auditor:	David Williams (1966 - 71)
Newsletter editor:	Bill White (staff 1961 - 97) 3 Jessop Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos, GLS4 3JG Tel: 01451 860943

## **Notice of Annual General Meeting**

You are invited to attend the 66th annual general meeting of the old Rendcombian society on Sunday 4th July 1999 in Room H1 at Rendcomb College at 12.00 p.m.

### Agenda

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive minutes of 65th AGM held on the 28th June 1998
3. To deal with matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive hon. treasurer's report
5. Election of officers: chairman and vice-chairman
6. Travel bursary
7. Society rules
8. Vote of thanks to the college

## **Minutes of the 65th Annual General Meeting**

Held on Sunday 28th June 1998 in the reading room at Rendcomb College

Present: Julian Comrie (46 - 54), Jane Gunner (75 - 77), Douglas Payne (40 - 48), Chris Wood (65 - 71 and staff), Hamish Wilson (71 - 78), Frank Dutton (36 - 44), Neil Lumby (68 - 73), Michael Miles (43 - 50), Bill White (61 - 97, staff), David Williams (66 - 71), Gerard Benson (44 - 50), Ted Jones (40 - 48), Philip Griffiths (40 - 43), Lawrence de V. Wragg (56 - 63), Hamish Auld (85 - 92), Colin Burden (66 - 97, staff), John Tolputt (headmaster)

1. Apologies: Sally Morris (78 - 80), Rev. W. Hussey (staff 74 - 78), R Smith (42 - 49)
2. The minutes of the 64th annual general meeting were signed as a correct record.
3. Matters arising out of the minutes of the 64th AGM

The president, Michael Miles, reported that he had pursued the matter of society cuff-links, but the outlay was too great as firms required too large a run to be produced. If anyone knew of a company that would do runs of 20 - 30 at a time he would be pleased to take the matter up again.

4. The hon. treasurer's report

Prior to the treasurer giving his report, the president thanked all the members of the society who had sent a top-up to their life subscription in response to his appeal to pre-1975 leavers. The total received was £1,325.76 for which he and the committee were very grateful.

The treasurer then took the meeting through the income and expenditure. He drew attention to the fall in shop sales which had prompted the centre colour spread in the newsletter. This had worked very well and he had received a lot of orders by post since the circulation of the newsletter. There were two items marked donations,

one of which was a result of the president's appeal which almost exactly matched the surplus for the year of £1,362.01 and would mean that the society now had a small buffer for when costs outstripped income. The second was donations to the Kathleen James memorial fund which would go towards purchasing key books for the library. He then read a letter of thanks to the society from Kathleen's daughters, Katherine and Helen. The treasurer then went on to explain that the zero entry for the travel bursary merely meant there had been no refund this year from an applicant.

The £100 contribution from the college was to cover the additional postage required to send out college promotional material with the newsletter.

Under expenditure the treasurer explained that socials covered the bars at hockey and rugby reunions. The hockey reunion this year had been particularly successful with the O.R.'s fielding 5 teams.

There had been extra postage for the president's appeal.

The treasurer went on to report that discussions were on-going with the college regarding the termly collection of the O.R subscription. The college felt that termly was too complicated, but annually was still under consideration.

At this point the chairman allowed the treasurer to take the travel bursary under his report rather than as a separate item further down the agenda. The treasurer pointed out that the travel bursary was a large annual commitment and could, in fact, either be commuted to bi-annually or reduced to £300 and only given to one applicant. Currently it can be divided between applicants at the committee's discretion. In response to this the president urged caution as he had in his appeal requested help with the travel bursary and some donors had endorsed its importance. After some further discussion it was agreed that the travel bursary should remain at £500 annually with the committee keeping a weather eye on the finances. This was proposed by Chris Wood and seconded by Gerard Benson and passed unanimously.

The subscription was reviewed. £52.50 was proposed by Chris Wood and seconded by Bill White and passed unanimously. This was a small increase but needed to keep pace with increasing costs such as postage - a disproportionate amount of which was spent sending the newsletter to overseas O.R.'s.

Ted Jones expressed the meeting's thanks to Chris Wood and in his turn, Chris Wood expressed his thanks to David Williams, the hon. auditor.

#### 5. Election of Officers

The secretary reported that she had received no external nominations and that both the treasurer and the hon. auditor had indicated they were happy to remain in post. This being the case they were proposed *en bloc* by Jane Gunner and seconded by Neil Lumby. They were appointed unanimously.

#### 6. Travel Bursary

Already taken under item 4.

#### 7. Society Rules

The rules and the reasons for the need to up-date them had been circulated in the newsletter. It was suggested by the chairman that a proposal should be made to delete the 1975 rules and replace them with the new 1998 version. This was proposed by Ted Jones and seconded by Michael Miles and passed unanimously subject to the following two amendments:

(i) Under 2c, the addition of the word 'former' at the beginning of the sentence. To read: 'Former pupils who have completed one year at the college.'

(ii) Under 3c a quorum should be reduced to 12.

8. The chairman gave a vote of thanks to the headmaster for once again allowing the society to use the college.

#### 9. Any Other Business

The chairman reported that prior to his death, Ernest Neal, a former biology teacher at the college, had offered the profits of the sale of his autobiography, "The Badger Man" to society members for the society. His family had kindly agreed to the continuation of this offer and anyone interested in having a copy at £15 including postage and packing were asked to sign the list in the hall.

Hamish Auld reported that there had been difficulty raising a cricket team and that it had been suggested that the leaving school 1st team captain should become a sport secretary, unless their situation made it impossible, in which case the previous year's would stay on for a second term. It was agreed this would be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Hamish also reported that to get around the problem of no longer being allowed a rugby fixture with the school, next winter there would be a challenge between a Mike Slark XV versus a Mike Newby XV. This was approved.

The meeting ended at 12.43 to enjoy an excellent buffet.

### **Summer Reunion - 28th June 1998**

Once again the day was affected by the weather to the extent that the cricket match had to be cancelled -

perhaps for the first time? Despite this, those who came to the A.G.M. and luncheon enjoyed a pleasantly relaxed occasion and an excellent buffet provided by the catering staff. The tours round the college again proved popular, numbers being swelled by O.R.'s who came just for the afternoon.

A justifiable criticism was made that there are no pupils about on these reunion days and so there is a lack of atmosphere and no opportunity to talk to current Rendcombians. Because of the changed arrangements since day pupils and weekly boarding were introduced, this is almost inevitable at the end of June, and the committee has spent some time considering a change.

Those who attended the buffet were:-

Staff & former staff

Mr & Mrs J.N. Tolputt (headmaster 87 - 99)	Mrs C.J. Sudbury (staff 86 - 96)
Mr W.J.D. White (staff 61 - 97) *	Mrs V. Fell
Mr & Mrs D. Essenhigh (staff 69 -)	Mr & Mrs J. Holdaway (staff 71 - 94)
Mr & Mrs C. Wood (65 - 71, staff 76 -) *	Mr S. Lea & guest (staff 88 - 97)
Mr & Mrs C.C. Burden (staff 63 - 97)	Mr H.A.G. Auld (85 - 92, staff 98-) *
Mr & Mrs J.R. Dennis (staff 59 - 82)	

O.R.'s

Mr F.C. Raggatt & guest (20 - 26)	Mr M.H.C. Combe Martin & guest (26 - 33)
Mr & Mrs R. Butler (22 - 27)	Mr I. Pengelly & guest (72 - 78)
Mr & Mrs A. Brain (29 - 37)	Mr J.D. Williams (66 - 71)
Mr E.A. Jones (40 - 48)	Mr N. Lumby (68 - 73) *
Mr & Mrs D.H. Hill (36 - 44)	Mr & Mrs G. Benson (44 - 50)
Mr M. Miles (43 - 50) *	Mr H. Wilson & guest (71 - 78)
Mr & Mrs J. North (37 - 45)	Mrs J.R. Gunner (75 - 77) *
Mr & Mrs P.A.T. Griffiths (40 - 43)	Mr R. Wood (39 - 46)
Mr D.J. Payne (40 - 48)	Mr L. Wragg (56 - 63)
Mr & Mrs J. Comrie (46 - 54) *	Mr D. Wragg (92 - 97)
Mr & Mrs N. Dakin (62 - 68)	

\* committee

Total 51



**OR Rugby Match: Sharks v. Crocs**

### **Travel Bursary**

Extracts from a visit to Israel by Jack Garland (Summer 1998)

Sunday 28th June - I had a taste of Israel's turbulent past and uncertain future even before I began my trip today. The fate for El Al flight number 0316 had police with machine-guns outside it, and when I went in I

was questioned for an hour by a teenage Israeli security agent on every aspect of my trip and especially on my aunt, who works at the Anglican International School in Jerusalem. They evidently found me suspicious, as I had to go and sit in a little room and watch while more agents unpacked my rucksack and emptied my camera of film.

Monday 29th June - This morning was very hot, but not as hot as much of Israel, as Jerusalem is relatively high up. Went walking with Tanya to get my bearings into the new city. We are living in the Jewish quarter, Jerusalem being split up roughly into ethnic districts, and this area is well-off, with lots of blocks of houses, gardens and shops which would not look out of place in any European city. The difference is that it was very hot, with no clouds, and there were a great many men wearing orthodox Jewish dress. This is usually a skull cap, black waist-coat and white shirt with white tassels hanging down from a belt to represent the laws of the Torah. Some orthodox Jews wear a fur hat and let the hair next to their ears grow into long fronds, but this is not religious, only a throwback to traditional Polish dress. We walked through a covered market after a while, which sold mangoes, houmous and pitta bread, which we bought for breakfast. I booked a trip to the Dead Sea for Tuesday, and we walked to the old city. The crusader walls are still very apparent, the old city being completely surrounded by them. They are smaller than they were by about 30 feet, but still very impressive. All along the wall are many gates, all rebuilt by Suleimann the Great in the 16th century, the Ottoman emperor



I studied at Rendcomb with Mr Morgan! The gates all have distinct characteristics, the Zion Gate being pitted with bullet holes from the disturbances against the British Mandate in the 1940s, and the gate we went through, the Jaffa gate, being built in a right angle to prevent cavalry being able to charge into the city unhindered.

Tuesday 30th June - I caught my Egged bus early to the Dead Sea, driving out of Jerusalem into a very inhospitable countryside. All pale dust and rock with a few scrub bushes, rusting, burned out cars and Bedouin Arabs in tents with scrawny goats. This is a rain-shadow area, so-called because no rain ever falls, and it reaches over 50°C in the summer - now, that is! Drove on for two hours, always downhill, (the Dead Sea is the lowest place on Earth) past various Kibbutzim, the famous collective farming groups which double as border guard posts near the Dead Sea. Also passed Jericho in the distance, now under control of Yasser Arafat and the PLO as part of the peace process. I could not imagine living in such a hot and dry countryside. The dryness is not like an Australian or American desert, the only other two I have seen. This desert has no colour to it, only a grimy grey, streaked in white near the Dead Sea by the salt deposits. At last I came to Masada at noon, a flat-topped mountain with a palace and fort built by Herod on the top. I took a cable-car up to the summit and walked around the site. Most amazing were the reservoirs built into the rock, and the view down to the Dead Sea. Jewish zealots had taken this fort during the Jewish revolt against the Romans, and the Romans had besieged the mountain for two years.

Thursday 2nd July - Felt ill today, perhaps drinking the water and eating food off the streets was catching up with me. However, remaining determined to take advantage of my time here. I climbed the Mount of Olives in the morning. This hill on the other side of the city faces the Temple Mount and the old city, and is a huge graveyard, intermingled with many churches. Here Christ ascended after the Last Supper, and this is where he is supposed to return on judgement day, entering Jerusalem through the Golden Gate. This gate was blocked up by Suleimann to try and stop the Messiah from entering. To be buried here is very difficult, as the souls here will be resurrected first and it is a very popular site to be buried in. The view of Jerusalem is

extraordinary, and complements well the view from the citadel, looking the other way. I sat in the Church of Gethsemane with Tanya and listened to the singing while looking over the city.

Saturday 4th July - At midnight we took the car, driven for two hours by a jolly Egyptian from Cairo with two wives, through the desert left at the foot of Mount Sinai. We walked up a track in complete darkness (we forgot torches) passing the shadowy St. Catherine's Monastery on our right until we came to a Bedouin camp. There we hired two camels and began the two hour trek up the mountain. It was quite cool at night, and the stars were very clear. It was a wonderful ride up the mountain in complete quiet and I felt like one of the three kings, we even followed the brightest star in the sky for a while. At last it was so steep the camels could go no further, so we continued on foot. We reached the top after four in the morning, and sat on the huge boulders of the summit to watch the sunrise. There were a few other people there also, and a tiny chapel built at the top. After the sun rose we saw the most amazing landscape that we had been climbing through, mountains and desert, not like the Dead Sea desert, but great red spires of rock, a cross between Mars, Australia and hundreds of Salisbury Cathedrals.

Sunday 5th July - This morning we went for a last swim, and swam with dolphins in the reef, a chance we could not miss. A diet of television has made dolphins very familiar but the experience was magical nevertheless. What I remember most was the noise they make. The water is full of it and swimming with dolphin song in my head through the reefs was what I most enjoyed.

### **Tribute**

A further tribute to **Mark Twyman**, whose death was reported in the last issue:-

"I was deeply shocked to hear about Mark's tragic death, as were all those who knew him at Rendcomb. I was lucky enough to know Mark well in his two short years at Rendcomb. I was also fortunate to spend a summer holiday with Mark and his family in Kingston, Jamaica where they lived. Mark loved to talk about anything associated with his birthplace, including reggae music and, of course, cricket. He took particular delight in showing me the sights, including highlights such as Bob Marley's house and the Jamaican cricket ground. The whole family welcomed me, parents Dorothy and Alex, younger brother David and sisters Alison and Sally. Most week-ends there would be the family drive to their coffee plantation high up in the Jamaican Blue Mountains where, after surviving the pot-holed road, the scenery was breath-taking. It is little wonder that the family enjoyed their relaxing week-ends there, and that Mark should return from England a few years later. I know how close he was to his family and it is to them I offer my sincerest condolences. I know they will miss him greatly."

Mike Twinning (1973 - 80)

### **Acknowledgements**

From Bill White:

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, I planned to use some of my very generous retirement present for a



holiday. This I did at the end of October. I spent a really memorable week in Siena, fascinated by the ancient streets and churches, the Cathedral, and of course Il Campo - though it was the wrong time of year for the famous Palio race. The weather was superb and walking in the surrounding Tuscan countryside with its autumn colours and glorious views was a real delight, enhanced by visits to San Gimignano, Monteriggioni, Montalcino and Pisa. It was an unforgettable experience and a much appreciated retirement present.

From Mr and Mrs Twyman:-

We wish to express our sincerest appreciation of your and the old Rendcombian society's thoughtfulness in sending us letters, the magazine and the print. The school will always have a special place in our hearts as a result of our relationship via our three children who attended Rendcomb. The depth of feelings expressed on Mark's death by friends and associates of his from Rendcomb and elsewhere in England - where he spent more than half his life before his return to Jamaica - has meant so much to us and Mary Anne. Nicholas is a lovely child showing depth and breadth even at 1 year old, with a most infectious laugh.

Thank you once again for your thoughtfulness.

### Deaths

The society has been saddened to learn of the deaths of the following and extends its sincere sympathy to their families:-

**Ernest Neal** (staff 1936 - 46) in April 1998.

The following tribute was supplied by Ted Jones (1940 - 48):-

Dr Ernest Gordon Neal, M.B.E., 1911 - 1998. Ernest Neal died on Sunday 5th April 1998. Cancer affected his final illness. A service of thanksgiving for his life was held in St Andrews Church, Bedford, on the afternoon of Tuesday 28th April. The congregation included a large number of friends and professional colleagues. The headmaster and Mrs Tolputt, Dick Margetts (35 - 43), Rudy Hale (39 - 46), Ted Jones (40 to 48) and Ian Menzies (39 - 46) attended the service and the reception after it in St Andrews Hall.

Ernest was a pupil at Taunton School and he graduated in science at London University. He then taught biology at Rendcomb from 1936 to 1945 where he was affectionately known as "Eggy". He was a dedicated and inspiring teacher and a man with a broad range of interests in the natural sciences and in many other fields. His skilful teaching enabled many of his pupils to go on to university or other training and to develop successful careers in the sciences or in medicine. He began his life-long studies of the badger while at Rendcomb, where he also started to develop his expertise in the photography of wildlife. He was a good sportsman at soccer and cricket, and he helped in their coaching. During the 1939 - 1945 war he supervised Rendcomb's production of food to supplement the war-time rations. He was also an organiser of the air raid precautions (ARP) for Cirencester and district, and was actively involved in civil defence.



Biology teacher, James Stutchbury, talking to Ernest Neal (right) in 1994

Ernest and his wife, Betty, lived in a family flat at the stables. Their three sons, Keith, David and Andrew were born in the late 1930's and early 1940's and lived in the stables flat in their early years. Ernest's

autobiography, "The Badger Man, Memoirs of a Biologist" was published in 1994. It elegantly covers his life and his wide range of scientific and other interests in detail, including his wife Betty and the family's years at Rendcomb, and his teaching and scientific interests when he moved to Taunton School in 1945, and on to his eventual retirement from teaching - but still actively pursuing many interests - in 1971. His travels to and scientific work in Africa, were amongst the rewards of his active retirement. He gained a doctorate from London University in 1960 on more detailed work on the badger.

My wife, Doreen, and I were privileged to get to know Ernest and Betty as friends during recent years as we live fairly near their Bedford home, which is shared with David, his wife Rachel and their family. "Eggy" and Betty maintained close links with their former Rendcomb and Taunton pupils and remained young at heart and interested in everything. Naturally, I did not have the nerve to call him by his old Rendcomb nickname, but he had a good sense of humour, and was amused when he had an unexpected response from an O.R. involved in authorising copyright arrangements who wrote to him "Dear Eggy".....and Ernest commented "that was the first time I had been called that since 1945."

Ernest Neal was a man of strong Christian beliefs and principles devoted to his family. He was a very good teacher and gave loyal support to his colleagues at Rendcomb and Taunton and in his many other activities. We extend our sympathy to Betty, Keith, David and Andrew in affectionate memory of a notable scientist and a good man.

From The Daily Telegraph - reproduced with due acknowledgments:-

Ernest Neal who has died aged 86 was a schoolmaster and expert on badgers. Neal first became fascinated by badgers in 1936 when he was a young master at Rendcomb College near Cirencester. With a knack for firing others with enthusiasm, he was soon undertaking detailed scientific study of the local setts with his sixth formers. In 1946 he published *Exploring Nature with a Camera*, and two years later *The Badger*, which has gone through five editions. The frontispiece was the first colour photograph of a wild badger to be taken at night.

In 1952 Neal scored another first when he filmed badgers by night, in the grounds of his brother William Keith Neal's house at Bishopstrow, near Warminster. The next year he obtained even better results at Camberley; indeed the badgers grew so blasé that they were not even disturbed by the fireworks on Coronation night. From 1954, as a founder member of the Mammal Society, Neal organised a survey of setts throughout the country. In one of his own experiments, he placed a stuffed badger from Taunton museum at the entrance to a sett. A boar badger emerged, growled, retired underground, and then reappeared backwards. The sow, by contrast, darted to and fro in front of the stuffed badger for 25 minutes, taking care to keep its hole guarded. Yet Neal's son Keith was able to persuade the badgers to take bread and honey from his hand.

As a biologist Ernest Neal found his principal field of interest in the reproductive cycle of badgers. Though they mate at all times of year, badgers only give birth in the spring, since implantation of the fertilised egg in the uterus is delayed until November. Neal postulated that the trigger for this process might be connected with the release of hormones into the bloodstream in the autumn, as badgers begin to live off stored fat. His thesis on delayed implantation earned him a PhD from London University in 1960. His expertise meant that he was in demand for such radio programmes as *Country Questions* and *The Naturalist*. In all, he took part in more than 200 programmes, developing a particularly successful association with Desmond Hawkins, who established the BBC Natural History Unit.

In 1958 a pair of film stars came Neal's way in the form of otter cubs rescued from a drain. He called them Topsy and Turvey, and brought them up. (In fact the first Topsy died, but was soon replaced by Topsy the second). Since the first object they were able to see was Neal's feet - in nature it would have been their mother - they became foot fetishists. Nevertheless, they learnt all manner of tricks, and Turvey became expert at diving from a board six feet above a swimming pool. Turvey also turned out to be an excellent actor, showing off to gratifying effect in front of the cameras at BBC Bristol. Neal's account of his life with cubs, *Topsy and Turvey - My Two Otters* was published in 1961.

In the 1960's badgers fell foul of landowners, who resorted to gassing them. Neal helped to amend Lord Arran's Bill to protect them, which became law in 1973. The outbreak of tuberculosis among badgers in the 1970's posed a further threat. Neal did what he could to protect them from the veterinary view that when a species was carrying a life-threatening disease it should automatically be destroyed. But the blanket culling policy which Neal opposed did little to reduce the infection of cattle with TB. It was a sad end to Neal's half-century's work for badgers. Yet neither by temperament nor by background was he a man inclined to repine or despair.

The youngest of four children Ernest Gordon Neal was born on 20 May 1911 at Boxmoor in Hertfordshire, where his father was Baptist minister. His mother was sprung from the Scottish Keiths, whose seat was Dunotter Castle, near Aberdeen. From early childhood Ernest was passionate about butterflies and wild flowers, pursuing this interest even after the family moved to Battersea in 1917. Educated on a bursary available to the sons of Baptist ministers at Taunton School, he at first aimed to become a doctor. Lack of

funds made that impossible, but with determination he gained a degree from London University in botany, zoology and chemistry at Chelsea Polytechnic. He began to teach at Rendcomb College in 1936, and 10 years later returned to Taunton to teach biology. As well as becoming head of science he was a housemaster for 17 years and second master for 10 years up to his retirement in 1971.

Neal found no conflict between science and the religion in which he had been brought up; indeed both disciplines taught him that "no man is an island unto himself". As a housemaster he therefore placed strong emphasis on fostering trust. In retirement he was never idle. He edited 12 volumes of the Helm Natural History series, and four of the Blandford Mammal Series. With his eldest son Keith he wrote a textbook, *Biology Today* (1975). He published four more books on badgers, including *The Natural History of Badgers* (1986). In 1962 he visited Africa for the first time and was deceived ("It's just a long walk uphill for most of the way") into climbing Kilimanjaro. He returned to Africa 22 times, carrying out research on the Banded Mongoose in Uganda, and acting as guest lecturer for Swan Hellenic. He published *Uganda Quest* (1971) and *On Safari in East Africa* (1991).

In 1956 the Zoological Society of London presented Neal with the Stamford Raffles Award. He was successively chairman and president of the Mammal Society. In 1964 he helped to found the Somerset Trust for Nature Conservation. His autobiography, *Badger Man*, appeared in 1994.

Ernest Neal was appointed M.B.E. in 1976. He married, in 1937, Helen Elizabeth ("Betty") Thomson; they had three sons.

**Miss N. Barnish** who was matron for a short time in the early '70's died in April 1998 after a courageous fight against ill health for many years.

**Mrs Bertha Telling** died in December 1998 aged 88 years. She was the widow of Mr Walter Telling, clerk of works at the college for 40 years, and had herself worked on the domestic side for many years.

**Denis Uzzell** (1926 - 34) died in September 1998. Mrs Uzzell writes:-

"On leaving Rendcomb, Denis went to Bristol University and then to Cambridge before starting his teaching career. He taught English and music at various schools including Gordonstoun. Ill health forced him to retire early from teaching; so he returned to Cirencester to work on his poetry. He published a book of poems called *Dragonfly* and another will be published in due course."

**F. H. Ashe-Jones** - 1910-1998. (Rendcomb 1925-29) His son, Martin, (1957 - 64) has sent the following tribute:-

"My father, whose contemporaries at Rendcomb would have known him as Frank Jones, died in Worthing on the 10th October 1998. The brother of Ted Jones (1940 - 48), he spent his early years in the village of Overbury below Bredon Hill, near Evesham, and from the local village school got a scholarship to Rendcomb, mainly courtesy of a village schoolmaster who saw his academic potential and steered him in that direction at a time when, as the eldest son of Irish parents, he had considered the possibility of entering the Church. I know he enjoyed and appreciated Rendcomb very much, from both the academic and the practical side, and later in life he was always keen to use the practical skills he had gained there in such things as woodworking whenever the need arose. He was a keen sportsman too, and was known, I believe, for having the longest throw in the school, being able to stand by the temple and throw a stone clean across the lake. It was a throw that would have been much valued in the cricket team but for the fact that he was instrumental in forming the "non-cricketers", not because he was against cricket as such, but because he felt there was too much time spent waiting around, and he already had leanings towards more energetic sports such as running and tennis, which he continued at university, and where he was elected a member of Oxford's athletic club, the Centipedes.

When he got a history exhibition to St John's College, Oxford in 1929 he was fulfilling his early promise and was expected to get a first, but changed to English half-way through the course, mainly because of his extraordinary relish for words and an amazingly retentive memory for quotations, especially verse - Greek, old English or modern English, it was all one. He was still able to quote verse to me on the day he died. On leaving Oxford, Frank



took a teacher's training course at the College of St Mark and St John, Chelsea, where his former Rendcomb headmaster, J. H. Simpson, had become head of college. During the later 1930's he held posts as English master in several grammar schools.

In 1939 he volunteered for service in the armed forces and was commissioned in, and served with, the R.A.F. Regiment in India and Malaya, and in 1946 went back out to Malaya with his wife and young family, first as an English master, then as a headmaster, and later as chief education officer in various states before finally becoming the chief inspector of schools for the Federation of Malaya (as it was then known). Coming back to Britain in 1962, he retained his links with education by teaching part-time at the Worthing College of Further Education, mostly English to foreign students which he thoroughly enjoyed, and often kept in touch with students subsequently, as he still did with contemporaries in Malaysia. In his later years he liked walking, gardening and golfing, anything which kept him close to nature for which he had a life-long affectionate interest, and when he became unable to walk he borrowed virtually every book going in the local library. He often used to talk about Rendcomb when I visited him, and it was clear that he was very proud of, and grateful to, the fledgling school, its outstanding teachers, and J. H. Simpson, for whom he had a particularly high regard, and that it did much to foster in him his open and generous view on life.

He is much missed by his wife Mollie, his daughter Hilaire, his granddaughter Adriana, his brother Ted, and other surviving family and relations, and also by myself."

**David George Morison** (1931 - 38) died suddenly in 1998. His son, Russell, has provided the following account of his life and career:-

"My father was born on the 18th January 1920 in Salisbury, England. He attended Rendcomb College and was senior year head prefect. After completing school, he was articled for accountancy in Bristol. He joined the Territorial Army in 1938. Following the outbreak of war he joined the regular army. He went to France three times during the 'phoney war' as a sergeant in the Tank Corps. He was commissioned in 1940 in the British army and then was transferred to the Indian army. He was officer commanding of a transport company in India, Burma, Northwest Frontier until the end of 1944. During this time he contracted rabies, beri-beri, dysentery and recurrent malaria. He met his future wife, Elva, in Rangoon in 1944. In 1945 he was in Singapore working with the Japanese war trials. He was then posted to Palestine in 1947 and married mum in Port Said, Egypt. Following this he was posted to Egypt in 1948 until 1952. He joined the Australian army in 1953 and emigrated to Australia. On arrival he became a naturalised Australian. As a matter of interest, his naturalisation certificate was signed by Hubert Oppenman (who was minister for immigration) the great olympic cyclist. He was then posted to Melbourne, then Horsham, then South Melbourne during which time he was elected as councillor with the South Melbourne city council. He served in Singapore, Malaya and Borneo from 1959 to 1962. It was in Singapore that he was bitten by the golfing bug which, as you all know, remained with him. In 1962 we moved to Puckapunyal - an army camp in Victoria where he was commanding officer of the Service Corps School and inaugural president of the Puckapunyal Golf Club. I'd like to mention some of his other significant achievements whilst he was in the army: he presented the Australian Army in Thailand with the SE Asian Treaty Organisation. He played cricket for the army and was a life member of the RSL and a member of the Regular Defence Force Welfare Association. He retired from the army with the military title of colonel in 1973. He was appointed executive director, South Australian Royal Society for the Blind from 1973 to 1981, and upon retirement was made a life governor of the Royal Society for the Blind. In 1981 he retired to Mackay to play golf (which was always his first love). He bought a small gift shop, the Tobacco Box, with a good friend, Lynn Creber. In late 1990, he had a heart by-pass operation which gave him a new lease on life. He spent the next years travelling to Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra and Port Stephens visiting his 4 sons, their wives and his 11 grandchildren, but always returned to Mackay to thaw out. He took the opportunity at this time to play most of the golf courses on the eastern seaboard and inland, as well as several in Western Australia."

**Dr. Alastair Milner Macdonald Wilson** (1929 - 36) died on 29th March 1999. We have received the following tribute:-

Alastair Wilson was 'a man o' pairts', as his Scots ancestors might have put it, and one "full of curiosity", as his students in Malaya wrote in a valedictory interview. He had a great talent for friendship and hospitality. His professional work as a medical microbiologist took him in turn to the two senior medical schools of the English tradition in Africa: Makerere in Uganda, and Ibadan in Nigeria. Thereafter, he was based for ten years in the University of Edinburgh Medical School, and he concluded his working life as a consultant microbiologist at the City Hospital, Edinburgh. Throughout his professional career he published scientific papers, some twenty-three in all, marked by scrupulous observation and clinical accuracy. Thus, working for various periods in five countries, he visited professionally still more, including the U.S.A., Russia, and Ghana - and in most of them he had, or acquired a working knowledge of the local language. Alastair always interacted engagingly. He retired - so termed - in 1981, but a written list of precepts that he prepared at that time began:

‘remain active’, ‘do something for others’, ‘mix with the young and with one’s peers’. With the endless support and comradeship of his wife of fifty years, he certainly accomplished all of these; and more! For example, he set himself ‘to learn a language a year’, and turned his bent for participant observation to the study of classical archaeology and to bird-watching. Rendcomb College, Cirencester, where Alastair was educated for eight years was largely a foundation for boys who were going to have to make their own way in the world, and it had as one of its prime aims the improvement of society. Alastair, throughout his life, pursued these aims. His many friends celebrate and mourn him as a brave, many-faceted, warm hearted spirit. To end with another quotation from that Malayan interview in 1974: "Have you seen how his eyes twinkle?"

**Rev. A. G. Granston Richards** (staff 1931 - 46) died in Lewes on April 6th 1999 aged 94. Many O.R.’s will remember him and his family with respect and affection and it is hoped that there will be tributes in the next edition, as the news of his death arrived just as this newsletter was going to press.

### Congratulations

Congratulations to Richard Dunwoody (1975 - 81) whose 1,679 wins makes him the most successful National Hunt jockey. Richard came third in this year’s Grand National riding *Call it a Day*.

### Births

To Graham and **Fiona Welford** (née Comrie, 1980 - 82) a daughter, Caroline Rachel, October 1997  
To Bridget and **Graham Jordan** (1966 - 73) a daughter, Miranda, May 1998  
To Monique and **Richard Law** (1963 - 70) a son, Douglas, October 1998  
To Sandy and **Simon Wormleighton** (1968 - 75) a daughter, Héloïse Sarah, May 1998  
To Stephen and **Carol Lamble** (née Franklin, 1977 - 79) a son, Robert George - August 1997  
To Geoffrey and **Julia Heron** (née Lascelles, 1989 - 91) a son, Sebastian, June 1998  
To Timothy and **Joanna Mills** (née Brain, 1979 - 81) a daughter, Sarah Natalie - February 1999  
To Jane and **Chris Horton** (1967 - 73) a daughter, Eleanor, June 1998  
To **Matthew** (1980 - 85) and **Alex Newman** (née Aylott, 1983 - 85), a daughter, India Siân 1994 and a son, Charlie Victor, 1995

### Marriages

**Annitta Duguid** (1990 - 92) to Mr Engel, July 1997  
**David Denby** (1975 - 82) to Anya, 1994  
**Graham Moore** (1971 - 78) to Diane, June 1998  
**Mark Webb** (1970 - 79) to Kaye, October 1998  
**Nick Hoare** (1978 - 85) to Kim, April 1999  
**Matthew Newman** (1980 - 85) to **Alex Aylott** (1983 - 85) 1991  
**Ian Pengelly** (1972 - 78) to Muriel Williams, March 1999

### John Tolputt, Headmaster 1987-99

It will probably come as a surprise to most old Rendcombians to learn that the Tolputts are leaving Rendcomb in August, when John takes up the headship of the Purcell School of Music at Bushey in Hertfordshire. In different ways Rendcomb’s last three headmasters have made unique contributions to the development of the school. Under Anthony Quick, we saw the first major expansion in accommodation - the building of what is now School House, of the Arts Block and of the conversion of the old rectory into the Junior House. Roger Medill master-minded the highly successful introduction of girls into the sixth form, thereby paving the way for the present fully co-educational status, and saw to further significant advances in accommodation, notably the construction of the sports hall and conversion of the old orangery into the Dulverton Hall. During his time, too, the number of pupils in the school, already increased by Anthony Quick, more than doubled.

John Tolputt therefore, in 1987, took over a vibrant and successful school which had changed and developed dramatically over the past 25 years. He, in his turn, has made a major contribution to the further development of Rendcomb, helping to ensure its future success. Two aspects of this are particularly outstanding: the creation of three new separate boarding houses and a fully co-educational school, with a flexible boarding

system and day pupils. In the achievement of such changes John's warmth of character, ability to strike up easy relationships, determination and attention to detail were of immense value, and only served to underline his deep commitment to Rendcomb.

John's love of the theatre and the arts in general also inspired many pupils and allowed audiences to enjoy some memorable productions of plays, both inside and on the terraces: the kind of inspiration he gave is splendidly captured in the tribute from Jessica Naish which follows. Just as John has inspired drama students, Patta has inspired others with her love of music, in individual instrumental lessons and as director of music for a year before David White's arrival, as well as singing in many of the school's musical productions. Rendcomb has benefited greatly from John and Patta's expertise in these fields.

John and Patta both have a deep affection for Rendcomb and a real love of the countryside round about, evident in Patta's devotion to wild animals and particularly badgers from which developed a close friendship with Ernest Neal. Everyone connected with Rendcomb, in the school and in the village, will remember their kindness, humour and warm friendship which have been the hallmarks of their time here. Personally I am especially grateful for their good-humoured tolerance of a crotchety elder statesman lurking about on the sidelines for so many years!

The society extends to John, Patta, Anna and Edward, its very best wishes for a happy and successful time in Bushey and looks forward to seeing them at its future reunions. The following tributes give an indication of the society's affection for John and Patta and gratitude for all they have done at Rendcomb.

WJDW



From David Vaisey:-

It comes as a bit of a shock to realise that I have known all the headmasters at Rendcomb except for the first - and he had left Rendcomb before I was born. John Tolputt, however, is the only one (to date, at any rate) in whose appointment I have had a hand. As quite a new governor in 1986 I was on the interviewing and selection panel, and I have remained a governor throughout his headmastership. I write therefore from two points of view: from that of a current governor and from that of someone who was a boy at Rendcomb from the mid 1940's to the mid 1950's when it was a very different school (with an all-boy, all-boarding complement of less than one hundred) under a very different headmaster in Denis Lee-Browne.

When John Tolputt was appointed, one of his referees said we should not appoint him if we were looking for an 'identikit HMC headmaster'. We did appoint him, because we weren't. In due time, of course, he became an HMC member, but he was never the conventional model.

I was impressed in 1986, and have gone on being impressed by John Tolputt's enthusiasm, his kindness, and his dedication despite all the changes that have occurred during his time at the helm, to that belief in developing the talent of the young in the way best suited to the individual (what used to be called 'the spirit of Rendcomb'). In these days when a school's effectiveness is too often judged on the sort of statistics that go to make up the government's league tables, some schools (and some school heads) are prepared to sacrifice some of the more broadening aspects of school life to those ends. John Tolputt did not do that. He, more than anyone, realises that parents considering a school for their child scrutinise the 'scores' in the league tables minutely, yet he strove to throw into the balance, too, Rendcomb's tradition for excellent acting on the stage, excellent work in the art department, and excellent music. He fought hard to maintain those three fine traditions.

Life has not been easy for heads of rural boarding schools of the size of Rendcomb during the Tolputt years. Rising costs have forced many middle-class parents to think more than twice about sending their children to boarding schools, while the ending of assisted places and of the Gloucestershire foundation scholarships deprived Rendcomb of that steady stream of able children from working-class homes (such as I was) who did so much for the school's academic record. It fell to John Tolputt to meet these challenges; and to introduce and oversee great changes. He has presided with skill over the transition from a boys' boarding school to a fully co-educational day and boarding school, new buildings and new facilities have been seen through to completion and he has kept the confidence of his staff, the parents, and the governors while doing it. It was not his good fortune to see recruitment so buoyant, however, that the school income was equal to everything he and the governors would have wished, but when has it ever been?

When the governors appointed John, they did not expect that the headmastership of Rendcomb would be his last job. It is probably wrong for any head to stay in post for more than a dozen years, and governors therefore tend either to appoint someone aged around forty in the expectation that he or she will develop the school and then move on with reputation enhanced to their last post elsewhere, or to appoint someone with ten or so years of their career still to come for whom this is their final job. John fell into the first category and thus moves at just the right time. He now goes on to face greater challenges in a school which is smaller than Rendcomb, and, like Rendcomb, needs to increase its pupil numbers if it is to do all it wants to do and to add new buildings. I will miss him, and Patta. I shall miss their friendliness and their cheerfulness. And I'm sure that they will miss Rendcomb, whose beautiful setting gave full play to their love of the countryside and of the outdoors.

The very best wishes of all Old Rendcombians go with them to their next challenge.

(David Vaisey, (1945 - 54) is Bodley's Librarian Emeritus)

Anne Boyd writes:-

I arrived at Rendcomb amidst a flurry of activity concerning the appointment of a new head for the coming academic year. All the administration had been completed and we were into short lists and a general state of expectancy tinged with a little unease. I had but two terms to learn my job and appear (hopefully) calm and efficient when the new head arrived. In my first full term the decision was finally made and the names of John and Patta Tolputt were murmured about the place with some curiosity and trepidation. John and Patta visited the office as soon as the news was official and all my doubts were dispelled. Their warm, friendly and informal manner instantly put me at my ease, and this was to be the beginning of seven very happy years as John's secretary. In the Christmas term the work began, and, still being a 'new girl,' the brain, such as it was, went into overdrive. In those early days John and Patta hosted parties and other events for parents, staff and other heads, and they quickly got to know and be known by many people. I helped out at these functions and John and Patta's friendly, relaxed approach assured their success and made them very pleasurable occasions. When Christine Sudbury joined me in the office we became very much a 'team', and despite the heat generated by both typewriters and secretaries, John remained calm, even stoic. His only armour being his wonderful sense of humour and the quietly spoken witticism as he closed the door behind him!

Among John's many skills was his numeric ability. To my great relief he always stepped in manfully and, in a matter of moments, my jumble of figures were presented in an intelligible and accurate fashion. John's love of the theatre is common knowledge to all who know him, and his talent gave a great deal of pleasure to many people, not least of all to the pupils. His productions at Rendcomb were a marvel of ingenuity and imagination. His encouragement, patience and understanding produced some wonderful surprises, particularly when the shy pupils blossomed on stage. Despite these successes John was always modest regarding his achievements. I always remember his reply when I was particularly impressed with a production - "It's all an illusion, Anne. Here today, gone tomorrow."

My lasting memory is, perhaps, of John's first working day. We arrived in the headmaster's study and John sat down at the large desk. He looked at me and said, "Well, what do I do now?" I think he found the answer very quickly.

My good wishes go with John and Patta for a very happy and successful future and my thanks for all their kindness, friendship and support over the years.

(Anne Boyd was the headmaster's secretary 1987 - 94)

From Bobby Morgan:-

When I first came to Rendcomb for an interview nearly ten years ago I was immediately struck by the warmth and the friendliness of the place, as are so many visitors to the school. John Tolputt fitted exactly into the impression that I gained on that first experience, going out of his way to welcome me as he does with any candidate who comes for a post at Rendcomb. He subsequently took the trouble to visit me at my previous

school in London and I knew then how easy it would be to work with John. There is none of the pretension, pomposity or dictatorial manner which seem to afflict a few of the incumbents of HMC. To anyone who has met him, John comes across as a decent man, civilised, humane and fair-minded. He is also remarkably resilient, standing up to the pressures of his office in constant good humour and calmness. These qualities have enabled John to handle even the most difficult situations with sympathy and the trust of those involved. John has relished the small scale of Rendcomb, which has made it possible for him to deal with pupils, staff, parents and governors at first hand. He knows his pupils well, always finding time for a chat and succeeding in making any individual feel a part of the community at Rendcomb. To all staff John has been remarkably approachable; his door is genuinely open and he will listen with equal ear to the most serious and trivial grievances. His sense of humour enables him to keep things in their proper perspective and he has always been ready to laugh at his own expense; his modesty and self-effacement can be salutary when one gets too puffed up with one's own importance. With visitors to the school that same sense of humour will quickly be evident and clock hall and the main staircase ring with the sound of John's laughter as he conducts his guests to and from his study.

The school has developed in so many new directions during John's time as headmaster. The changes have involved him sitting on countless committees of widely differing composition. Here he has been served well by the attributes of patience and willingness to allow others their opinion while guiding the meeting towards what he actually wants himself. Achieving the successful introduction of co-education throughout the school is the legacy of all that hard work and it is probably that achievement for which John will be remembered most. My own personal memories of John will include his valiant support for boys' and girls' hockey teams, as for all games teams, even when things weren't going too well on the pitch. He delighted in the success of the pupils and their own elation when Rendcomb overcame opposition from much larger schools. I will remember the encouragement given to the cultural life of the school which allowed staff to achieve outstanding success with their pupils in art, drama and music. Few who saw them will forget his own superb dramatic productions, of which "Oliver!" and "Midsummer Night's Dream" were my favourites.

Yet perhaps the enduring memory will be John's public speaking, particularly when the occasion really demanded the right response from the headmaster. I will think back to the morning of founder's day in 1996, when John had to deliver his headmaster's report just after receiving the news of Peter Sudbury's untimely death. He gave his usual assured, witty and informative performance in delivering the report and then at the end of the speech was able to handle with great composure the task of telling a stunned audience the sad news and paying brief tribute to Peter. The occasion and the reaction to it said a great deal about both men.

Bobby Morgan has been deputy headmaster since 1990.

From Jessica Naish (1987 - 89):-

Mr. Tolputt was a very important figure during my formative years at Rendcomb. It is a pleasure to be able to recall his subtle influence on my own beginnings as a theatre practitioner and also on the cultural life of Rendcomb as a whole. It is also sad knowing that Rendcomb is losing a head who was so actively supportive of the arts. Those who have ever been involved on any level with theatrical productions or workshops will know the value of theatre personally, socially and academically. John Tolputt acknowledged this value not only in ideology, but also in practice. During the two years I was at Rendcomb, there was something of a pioneer spirit amongst a small troupe of aspiring dramatists. Being 'new' himself John Tolputt gave fuel to new ideas; he encouraged experimentation personally and theatrically. Perhaps from experience of being an actor on the fringe himself, Mr Tolputt had first hand understanding of the need to transform ideas into reality on the stage. I found this empathy incredibly inspiring.

Following a request from Ann-Marie Chapman and myself to take the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) gold acting award, Mr Tolputt leapt at the chance and soon set up the examination procedure. This included many hours of personal coaching and rehearsing in his office, usually during precious lunch hours or after school. I still have the image of Ann-Marie and me tearing up his office as Helena and Hermia in the 'painted maypole' scene from *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. We had total freedom to be the best we could be without fear of failure. I began to learn during these acting sessions that there is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to play a character, but through trial and error with the right guidance you can discover what works best within a given moment or scene. It was this process of learning through doing which I am sure aided me in my academic understanding of plays and literature. John Tolputt gave me the licence at Rendcomb to marry academic study with practice. The space and encouragement John Tolputt gave to his students to produce plays was not only generous, but also brave. Particularly when, after an Arts Society read through of Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound*, a motley crew from 6B decided to put the play into production, on their own. No help, thanks! In a review Martin Griffiths wrote this: "stubbornness to keep it going and a good deal of ability to realise it so successfully". We certainly did it our way, and how could a show fail with such an eclectic mix of eccentrics in the cast: Martin, Powell, Tredwell, Norbury and Chapman to name a few. The

point I wish to make is that we were given the chance to do it our way, to make our own mistakes, to find our own costumes, design our own programme, direct it ourselves. We were given a rare opportunity to push ourselves as individuals and as a year group.

Even after my leaving Rendcomb John Tolputt continued to show interest in my career in theatre (when everyone else is advising you find a 'proper' job such encouragement goes a long way). This interest turned into collaboration when, in my final year at Kent University, 1993, I brought the Antic Theatre Company to Rendcomb. We spent two intensive days in residence at the school devising a play called *Colour Conspiracy*, which involved about twelve students led by Chris Oliver. Music was composed, scripts were written and on the night of the show some very impressive performances were given; all in only two days. This project continued to prove how, under direction from John Tolputt, Rendcomb had become a true seed-bed for the arts. I'd also like to thank John for the 'fish and chips' money - a mini-bus full of starving artists on the road to Kent could have been potentially dangerous.

In his first headmaster's report John Tolputt made reference to J. H. Simpson's first founder's day speech describing "a school where everyone knew everyone and each could find a niche, find something he was good at", in an atmosphere of trust, freedom, self-discipline and kindness. In my opinion and I'm sure that of many others, John Tolputt continued this tradition that sets Rendcomb apart from other schools. He also did much more by fostering a uniquely open environment in a boarding school where, regardless of academic prowess individuals were encouraged to find their best means of self expression. Working using theatre in education myself now, I am in the position of encouraging all sorts of young people to engage with and understand the world through dramatic means. What they don't at first get on the page they often do on the stage. That was my own experience also, which was given an enormous boost by John Tolputt's influence as head of Rendcomb.

I'd like to thank John for his invaluable, and imaginative guidance. I wish him, Patta, Anna and Edward the very best for the future. He will be greatly missed at Rendcomb, but the seeds he has sown will continue to grow.

(Jessica Naish is a co-founder of Rough House, resident theatre company at the Hope Arts Centre in Bristol, and currently Education Animateur at the Sherman Theatre in Cardiff. In July she is planning to visit Lucy Merrett in China, where Lucy has been teaching English with VSO in Jilin Province.)

From Peter and Steven Croft:-

We have both had the pleasure of working alongside John Tolputt and have many experiences and memories on which to draw. We have found that we share similar memories of his qualities. John has a fascinating ability of memorising pupils' first names and family background. This may seem a trivial point to mention, but what he achieved by so doing was to break down the stereotype relationship of pupil and headmaster, making him approachable and friendly. John has always taken the time to talk to the pupils and even today remembers the old Rendcombians, recalling every little detail about them.

Under the leadership of John Tolputt, Rendcomb College has gone through many changes, all of which have developed the college in line with the current educational trends. In our time we have witnessed two new boarding houses being built, Lawn and Stable house, allowing more pupils to be educated at the school within modern and well equipped surroundings. Rendcomb then became more flexible in its approach to boarding and introduced day release. However the most dramatic change under the leadership of John was the introduction of a fully co-educational system. To look back and see Rendcomb as it was when John first took control and to visit it now, one can clearly see that without his intervention and proactiveness Rendcomb would not be where it is today in terms of the education and facilities it has to offer.

His passion for drama saw even the most timid pupil take to the stage. One of his greatest qualities was in his teaching of drama. In every lesson he adopted the same philosophy of supporting the abilities of the individual and giving everyone an equal opportunity to demonstrate their talents. His ability to create complete class involvement resulted in pupils wishing for more periods a week, a feat few teachers ever achieve. This nurturing of talent at such an early age led to many successful theatre productions and in some cases it shaped career paths.

John Tolputt's new school is going to benefit enormously from his leadership, interpersonal skills and passion for drama. We wish him and his family all the very best for success in the future, and hope they have a rewarding and fulfilling time at the Purcell School.

(Peter Croft (1986 - 93) has returned to the University of Coventry where he is doing a master's degree in automotive design. Steven Croft (1988 - 95) works for a pharmaceutical company after graduating from Birmingham University.)

## Dr Graham Smith, Physics 1974 - 99

Graham Smith is retiring in July after 25 years at Rendcomb. His scholarly and meticulous teaching of physics has helped and inspired many Rendcombians during this time, their successes being evident not only in examination results but also in the number who have read physics at a university. Graham has also contributed in a variety of ways to life at Rendcomb outside the classroom. A superb swimmer, he took on the running of the sport, teaching beginners and supervising swimming for long hours in the summer. He was also for a time involved in bell-ringing and junior chess and was Kaye Knapp's assistant in the Junior House. Perhaps Graham's most valued work among his extra-curricular activities however, was as examination officer, a task he took over from David Sells. To this he was able to bring the meticulous application to detail, seen in his teaching, and so necessary when completing all the examination entrance requirements and timetables, and also to create a sympathetic but efficient atmosphere in the examination rooms. His reliability and calming presence certainly helped candidates to overcome examination nerves.

Although devastated by Hilary's sad and untimely death, Graham continued to give loyal service to the school on a part-time basis and to support James and Rebekah in the final stages of their education. All old Rendcombians will want to send Graham and his family their very best wishes for the future.

W.J.D.W.

From David Hawkswell:-

In 1974, Graham joined the physics department at Rendcomb direct from a research post at the University of Sussex. His arrival was timely, as the science sixth forms were very large and the facilities and space available limited. Graham was immediately given the responsibility of a heavy timetable including sixth form and examination groups. He set about his work with the thoroughness and dedication which has characterised his 25 years at Rendcomb. It was a great relief to be able to share the teaching load with a teacher of such high academic ability. Whether in supervising day long practical examinations, setting and marking internal papers or producing reports, I could always be certain that the work was meticulously done. Graham was also heavily involved in the many changes which have taken place during his time at Rendcomb. As the computing developed it meant that he had to take more and more responsibility in the physics department. Outside the classroom he was involved in tutoring, dormitory duties, chess club, stamp club and science outings. Although not a sportsman, he even took teams to away fixtures and could be seen on the touch-line at 4th XV rugby matches! In later years his great contribution has been in organising external examinations. As these have become more complicated with numerous boards and modular examinations, Rendcomb was very fortunate to have someone with Graham's talent willing to carry through such a responsible and onerous task.

In late 1977, Graham married Hilary Jones, who had come to Rendcomb as matron in 1975. This brought further stability to Graham's work at the college, and the Smith family, Graham, Hilary, James and Rebekah became an integral part of both college, Church and village life. Graham assisted with communion services for many years and Hilary was a churchwarden until her untimely death in 1994.

I know that many O.R.'s will have reason to be grateful to Graham, not only for the high standards he set in his teaching, but also for his integrity and dedication in all aspects of his life at Rendcomb. I enjoyed the nineteen years I worked with Graham and continue to value his friendship.

(David Hawkswell was head of physics 1973 - 93)

From James Sleeman:-

For many O.R.'s physics was an unfortunate consequence of having to follow a balanced curriculum until the end of the fifth year. The twice weekly trips to the stable block were made bearable only by some high-tech, and amusingly fragile gadgets, or the pleasures of handling small quantities of plutonium whilst dreaming of mass destruction. Faced with this background of apathy from those determined to leave numbers behind as soon as possible, Dr Smith's years of commitment to Rendcomb science are all the more impressive. I enjoyed the benefit of Dr Smith's enthusiasm for his subject through both G.C.S.E. and A-Level and I think that he was definitely at



his best, and most comfortable, with smaller classes. This was especially true with sixth form sets when the subject presented some seemingly insurmountable conceptual challenges requiring laborious, and often repeated, explanations. Dr Smith's patience and commitment, including additional tutorial sessions if required, was greatly appreciated by all those struggling with a weighty mechanics problem or an apparently terminal nuclear decay. Small A-Level sets were inevitably the result of the recent disillusionment with physical sciences amongst pupils in Britain, often selecting more fashionable arts and social studies subjects over the hard sciences, the latter ironically being viewed as less relevant in the modern world. Dr Smith regularly expressed his frustration with this trend, but responded positively by running a number of science based extra-curricular activities on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, again giving up free time for more hours spent in and around the labs. Whilst these often involved preaching to the converted, there was hopefully the re-ignition of at least a few flagging interests. Dr Smith's patience did, however, run short on occasion. A notable example was his astonishing bellow from across the room when one pupil attempted to upgrade a 12v electronic motor to a much more exciting 240v system.

Outside of the stable block, Dr Smith played active roles in the more pastoral side of college life, both as an assistant housemaster and a licensed assistant for Holy Communion in St Peter's church. As the former, whilst often viewed as a light alternative on evening duty to Mr Knapp or Mr Willson, Dr Smith, on silent rubber soles, retained the capacity to surprise at importune moments, although the retribution was rarely of truly 'character building' proportions.

To conclude, Dr Smith's knowledge of physics was far in advance of that required to teach to the level of his chosen career. Whilst following increasingly rigid curricula, he consistently added depth to what would otherwise have been a very two-dimensional understanding of a many-dimensional subject. It is this of which I am reminded when I think of the numerous infuriating hours spent trying to square apparently circular problems and which has left me with as great a respect for the logic and mental agility behind physics as for the more obvious results themselves.

(James Sleeman (1985 - 92) works for Schrodgers, investment bankers)

### **The New Headmaster - Mr Gerry Holden**

Gerry Holden succeeds John Tolputt as headmaster in September 1999. Mr Holden is currently deputy headmaster at Frensham Heights School in Surrey. Formerly head of history at Forest School and Millfield, he has an MA in modern history from St Andrew's and has been a senior examiner for Oxford and Cambridge Board. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and has written articles for the Modern History Review. He is also a qualified football referee, and enjoys golf, skiing and rugby. His wife, Liese, who is a keen horsewoman, and his son Alex, will join him at Rendcomb. They have already visited Rendcomb twice, and Mr Holden appeared briefly at a recent headmaster's assembly. Addressing members of the school, he talked with enthusiasm of the special spirit of Rendcomb, and of the generous welcome he had received.

### **At Rendcomb**

The following members of the society have sons or daughters at the school:-

O.R.'s: J.M. Webb, M.C. Jones, D.H.N. Hogarth, D. Uzzell (dec'd), J.R. Gunner

Staff and former staff: C.C. Burden, J.D. Stutchbury, K. Ewing, P. Sykes, K. Taplin

### **Summer Ball - Saturday July 8th 2000**

Arrangements are under way for a ball to be held at the college. We hope that O.R.'s will support this as enthusiastically as they did for the 75th anniversary ball in 1995. Details will be sent out later in the year. For other information please contact the bursar (on 01285 831562) who is chairman of the ball committee. O.R. representatives are Chris Wood, Jane Gunner and Bill White.

## Rendcomb Reminiscences



Left to right: Frederick J. Batten, Denis Uzzell, James Dixon

The photo was taken in what was called the music room by Michael H.C. Martin (1926 - 33) with a 12/6d Vest Pocket Kodak No. 2 on what appears to be a Sunday evening in May 1931 (see calendar on wall) during the Sunday compulsory quiet period (QP) when boys retired to any classroom in the school they liked for an hour to write letters home or to do school work. The music room was a multi-purpose room, a classroom with a blackboard over the marble chimney piece at North End (now demolished) and high standing master's desk. It had a piano, wireless set (hardly ever worked properly) and the school gramophone used for music appreciation classes, community singing classes and for dances organised by the entertainment committee on Saturday evenings. It was used now and again as a "green room" whenever plays were performed on the stage in Big School next door as there were double doors leading eastwards to the back of the stage (now panelled over). It had a ping-pong table and was still adorned by the last statue of a naked man, both discernible in the bay window. The three pupils are wearing their Sunday (long trousers) suits provided by the college and all three are wearing pullovers and ties and looking pretty neat and tidy. Fred Batten was the son of a coal miner and lived in Coalpit Heath, Denis Uzzell was the son of the famous cabinet maker and lived in Cirencester, Jim Dixon was the son of a dentist and lived in Sale, Manchester. The pupil who took the photograph was orphaned in 1928 and became the ward of his titled cousins who lived in Startsholme Hall, Lincoln - a very Victorian country house (now demolished) run on strict Victorian lines (early morning prayers for a servanful household, black tie at dinner etc).

Those who have read J. H. Simpson's "Sane Schooling" or the more easily available Osborne, James, J.C. and K.L. "A History of Rendcomb College" can read in the appendices page 175 a quotation from Simpson's book when he writes about the social mixture, the following:-

"I can recall one boy from a middle-class professional home who in the same holidays stayed at the homes of two of his school fellows - first in a country house and afterwards in the cottage of an unemployed miner."

This would be Jim Dixon coming to stay with M.H.C. Martin (who spent some time with him in Manchester) and then going on to stay with Fred Batten. M.H.C. Martin also spent a few days with Denis Uzzell in Cirencester before term started.

## The Lake

Some tentative first steps have been taken towards rescuing the lake from its present state of overgrown wilderness as part of a millennium project. Frank Dutton's (1936 - 44) recent reminiscences on visiting the site are therefore interesting and timely:-

Situated at the foot of the Cheltenham drive, near the site of the now-demolished lodge, the lake was one of the principal features of Rendcomb Park and an irresistible magnet to small boys with time on their hands and a strong desire to become involved with large amounts of muddy water. It had been formed in the period of the mansion's construction in the mid 1860's, by diverting part of the river Churn's flow over a weir into the lake's upper end and damming the flow at the lower end, with the resultant overflow returning to the main stream close to the ornamental stone bridge carrying the drive. The weir was constructed of stout horizontal



wooden planks set on edge above each other in guiding slots, the total height being adjusted to allow for variations in the seasonal water flow, while the dam outflow consisted of an attractive natural stone waterfall. A small island was located in the centre of the lake. A trim stone-built boat-house was sited near the deep end, raising thoughts of a gardener turned temporary boatman rowing or poling the inhabitants of the "big house" across the water on a pleasant summer afternoon excursion.

The area teemed with wildlife, principally aquatic birds. Moorhens, coots and ducks by the dozen nested there, while even the occasional dipper was seen near the waterfall. Less often stray wild geese and more rarely a solitary swan could be observed swimming around majestically. The high point of the lake's schooldays existence was without doubt the 1938 canoe regatta, described and illustrated in Volume 1 of the "History". But apart from this widespread nautical interest, one of the regular small pleasures of our young years was to take "a walk around the lake". Badly misnamed, this activity consisted more of an extended battle with undergrowth, brambles and wire fences on the main road side, and a stumbling progress along a rough, narrow and very uneven track at the foot of the hillside on the other, with the ever-present risk of tripping headlong into the mud and weeds at the water's edge.

Swimming, wading and paddling in the lake were forbidden, owing to the presence of a deep channel at the lower end, but despite this prohibition countless wading visits were made to the island, the water there rising only hip-deep in the main channel. Evidence of these visits was plain to see in the remains of numerous small fires, probably an inevitable outcome of years of "cowboys and indians".

Even before world war II the upper part of the lake had begun to silt up, containing a large mudbank covered in reeds and bulrushes, and extending downstream towards the island, leaving only a narrow channel allowing water to enter the lake.

In June 1998 I made a special point of visiting the lake. The old Cheltenham drive was passable with care by car, a far cry from the days when a large green Bentley tourer in the charge of a certain D.W. L-B would roar along it at 60-plus on its way to Cheltenham. But my first sight of the lake was a shattering experience. No water was to be seen, and the entire basin was filled with a mass of weeds, reeds, undergrowth, shrubs and even trees, all of which must have appeared since 1950. The boat-house had vanished, although a few foundation remains were located, and the island was unidentifiable among the mass of foliage. Later, following my return to the main building, I remarked - only half jokingly - what a tremendous long-term project for P.W. the clearance of the lake would provide, to be advised by Chris Wood that the situation had long ago passed beyond that stage, as I of course had already realised. He commented further that a proposal was already actively in hand to obtain a "millennium grant" to have the lake cleared, dredged and re-landscaped.

(To accomplish this, the top weir level at the lake's upper end would need to be raised to divert the entire Churn water flow back into its adjoining main river bed, and to break open or pierce the "waterfall" dam in order to drain out all remaining water from the lake, before clearing and dredging could commence. Another problem would also arise, that of the disposal of the masses of excavated material, which could possibly be spread in the downstream river meadows. A certain amount of improvement to the Cheltenham drive would probably also be necessary, as the only means of access following the lake's refurbishment).

It is sincerely trusted that the grant application will be successful, and that in the not too-distant future we can hope to see the lake transformed even beyond its former glory, with a selection of flowering ornamental trees, shrubs and occasional clumps of brightly-coloured perennial plants and water lilies dotting the area. Other

prime requirements would be leisure seats, shelters and a cleared - preferably surfaced - walkway around the lake. Perhaps the boat-house could be persuaded to rise again.... Rendcomb canoeing could even be encouraged to take on a new lease of life. Who knows....?



### **Rendcomb in the 1950's - Recollections from Michael Edwards**

My years at Rendcomb covered the first part of the 1950's. The school was probably very different from today. There were only about 90 boys (the phrase was "pupils") and a limited number of subjects were available, with no choices up to the fifth form. Rendcomb's founder believed that an important part of progressive education was that it should be experienced in the countryside, and the headmaster, Lee-Browne, was known to mention this from time to time! Progressive education as practised at Rendcomb at that time, was serious stuff.

Improving mental and physical tasks were designed to fill the time, and trivial entertainments were to be spurned or severely curtailed. Television was just being re-established on the airwaves following its wartime suspension, and certainly played no part in school life. As far as I know, none of my contemporaries had it at home either. Radio, even Lord Reith's uplifting B.B.C., was considered inappropriate, and the staff were presumably discouraged from encouraging frivolous listening in their rooms, although we did have one jazz aficionado on the staff in my time who could sometimes be influenced to allow a select group to huddle round his radio for the sole jazz programme the B.B.C. stooped to transmit - the 30 minutes of jazz club once a week (off-peak of course). Sports and the woodwork shop had a high profile, but for quite a good minority of Rendcombians learning to know and appreciate the countryside and its plants and animals was an important element of our leisure. Although I did not realise it at the time, this was an important part of my personal heritage from school.

It was in those years that I developed an interest in wild orchids, and my photograph album contains black and white pictures of a dozen different orchids found near Rendcomb - one taken within 20 yards of the school buildings. I had my own favourite spots, mostly kept to myself, for snakes. We did have boys who would take a stick to a snake and display its corpse for general entertainment, but I was simply fascinated to observe them - not without a slight unease where adders were concerned. My favourite and most reliable spot was amongst broken masonry and nettles on the further side of the Churn downstream from the Cheltenham lodge. On a hot summer day several adders and grass snakes could be found basking if one approached quietly. Large edible snails "Roman snails" were in the woods towards Woodmancote. The general belief was that they had been introduced during the Roman occupation, and survived near settlements and villas ever since. Another favourite was a dipper - or more likely a pair, though I never saw two together - under the waterfall where the lake flowed out under the bridge on the Cheltenham drive.

Perhaps nothing so well illustrates the changes in the countryside and rural life as the fact that during my years at Rendcomb we were visited by a pack of otter hounds which hunted with great commotion, and to the detriment of one of J C James's history lessons, along the Churn. I have only been back to Rendcomb a couple of times in the last 40 years, but now I have moved down to Bristol in my retirement I sometimes think of going back to these spots. I resist the urge, and leave it to others to tell me if these old friends are still to be found at Rendcomb.

Michael Edwards (1948 - 1954). (After national service and university, he went into the insurance industry and worked for the same group for 38 years, mostly in Liverpool. This involved almost separate careers in numerous different disciplines - underwriting, claims, personnel, marketing, planning and general management. He is now almost completely retired, having run down his working life in easy stages through freelance consultancy. He has four grown-up children and lives in Bristol.)

## Sport

O.R. RUGBY - December 1998

After two years of transition, it was agreed by players and spectators that the O.R.'s rugby match had finally hit upon the right formula.

Mike Slark's Sharks



Ian Thompson, John Morgan, Patrick Boydell, Francis Barton, William Brittain-Jones, Chris Baker, Tim Hill, Philip De Havilland-Hall, Mark Wilks, Freddie Ingham, Alister Harris, Chris Scarth, Ashley Taylor, Seun Ismail, Miles Brown, James De Lisle-Wells, Andrew Donovan, Steven Jones  
Penalties: Boydell x 2; Try: Baker, converted Boydell

Mike Newby's Cross



Alex Brealy, Giles Brealy, Angus Trowern, Iain Whittaker, Charles Paine, Patrick Morgan, Chris Oliver, Hamish Auld, Hugh Costelloe, Steve Hazell, Jon Powell, Jon Roney, Charles Hutton-Potts, Barrie Davies, Marcus Head  
Tries: Hazell, Paine, converted Brealy

The ground was firm to middling as were some of the limbs. The presence of Mike 'sling it out' Newby was inspirational to his XV. The participating O.R.'s went back as far as leavers from the early 80's. The experience and skill of the Newby's equalled the exuberance of the almost youthful Slark's, the result at the end of a game of entertaining and worthwhile rugby was 13-12 to the Sharks. The afternoon was enjoyed by all and this was certainly borne out by the atmosphere in the post match festivities.

Thanks must go to Mr Martin Griffiths (staff) and a couple of current pupils for providing the touch-line entertainment. We intend to repeat this event next year, if you would like to participate please contact us as soon as possible. Many thanks also to all those who played and those that supported.

Mike Slark, Alex Brealy, Hamish Auld

#### SCHOOL HOCKEY

Statistically the boys' season has been less good than in previous years, however many of the matches which were lost proved to be very close contests and the 1st XI lost several of their matches, including the O.R. match, by just one goal. Wins were secured against Pate's, Bournside and RGS, Worcester. There are 133 boys in the school and it was quite an achievement to run nine XIs, sometimes simultaneously. Alex Brealy who ran the 3rd XI would be the first to admit that we lacked strength in depth this season although he is looking forward to the present fourth year feeding up the school because the U15A XI had the best record of any team. The girls had a good season (September to December) and the 1st XI were particularly successful following their tour to Holland in July 1998, where they played strong sides in and around Rotterdam and Amsterdam.

#### O.R. HOCKEY

The O.R. matches were played in excellent spirit and were well organised by Alex Brealy. It is good to see that hockey is still a popular game amongst O.R.'s. Please note that next year's men's fixture will be on the same weekend, despite term dates moving with a late Easter, i.e. Sunday 12th March 2000.

The ladies' match will be moved to Sunday 5th December 1999. A ladies' netball fixture is planned for Sunday 12th March 2000.

The following played in this years fixture and are thanked for their support:-

Ladies Team: A. Howard, R. Knightly-Brown, B. McKelvie, R. Perry, E. Jakobs, S. Brown, M. Preen, (& H. Leathart, H. Mizon, F. von Gleichenstein, N. Breinfeld, N. Abbott - non O.R.'s)

Lost 0 - 1

Mens Team 1: S. Jones, K. Chaiwatanasirikul, R. Sage, S. Maylott, J. Webb, R. Webb, H. Davies, C. Scarth, T. Sharman, J. Morgan, P. Moore, A. Branston, A. Taylor

Won 2 - 1

Mens Team 2: T. Abbott, R. Witchell, M. Garcia, I. Thompson, M. James, C. Horton, S. Grey, P. Boydell, A. Donovan, W. Brittain-Jones, M. Moody, S. Croft, D. Mackonochie

Lost 1 - 3

Mens Team 3: H. Auld, J. Emerson, S. Taylor, T. Brealy, M. Cordeux, A. Payne, F. Ingham, G. Somers, A. Brealy, J. Graham, S. Croft

Won 4 - 3

#### Old Rendcombian News

**Ted Jones** (1940 - 48) writes: "I hear quite regularly from one of my contemporaries, **Geoffrey Bye** (1940 - 48), now retired in Guilford, Connecticut after a career in the oil industry in South America and the U.S. He is a keen long-distance walker and is aiming to compete here at Gateshead in August 1999 in the World Veterans' Athletic Meet. Geoffrey has been in touch with Douglas Tidy, who taught at Rendcomb after war service in the R.A.F. before going up to Oxford. Geoffrey has also been in touch with another of our contemporaries, **Tim Denehy**. I keep in touch with **Mike Shephard** (1944 - 47), who now lives in Vancouver and has retired from the Canadian Pacific Airways. He and his wife, Joanna, still do a fair amount of globetrotting and visit Britain most years. I hear occasionally too, from **T.T. Walters** (1940 - 49) who was in the senior ranks of British Aerospace on electronics systems until ill-health caused him to retire."

**John Gosden** (1947 - 54) writes: "After two miserable summers and a poor sort of winter, I decided that County Cork was not the place to retire my aching joints, so I have moved to a climate which past experience has shown to be one I can not only tolerate but enjoy. As a keen naturalist (one of the life-long enthusiasms

engendered by my time at Rendcomb), Thailand also has many attractions, even though most of the primary forest has long gone, and I can sit in my garden and watch kites circling overhead, two kinds of kingfisher hunting the stream which forms my boundary, bee-eaters perched on power lines and an assortment of large and brilliantly coloured butterflies - not to mention orchids, gardenias and other flowers in the garden. As always, there will be a welcome for any O.R.'s passing (though some notice would be appreciated!). My address is:

9/25 Chaofa Thanee Housing Project, Thanou Chaofa, Thambol Chalong, Ampur Muang, Phuket 8300 THAILAND."

**Tom Nicholls** (1983 - 90), found himself on the other side of the fence when he brought a team from St John's School, Marlborough to play a Rendcomb XV. (Rendcomb won 20-6)

**Annitta Engel** (née Duguid, 1990 - 92) works for Marks and Spencer Plc as a food technologist with direct responsibility for meat. She has been working for Marks and Spencer since graduating from Leeds University in 1997 with a degree in European food science. She was married in July 1997.

**David Denby** (1975 - 82) read philosophy at U.C.L. on leaving Rendcomb (obtaining first class honours). He then did a further degree (B.Phil) at Oxford. He moved to the United States in 1989 and did a Ph.D at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Having run out of philosophy degrees to do (sic!) he has been teaching philosophy at various colleges and universities in the U.S. for the last few years. Most recently he has been teaching at Tufts University in Boston, MA. He also writes a little, principally in the philosophy of language, logic and contemporary analytic metaphysics, though he "dabbles" in ethics and the history of philosophy too! He married his wife, Anya, in 1994. They have no children yet, but do have a horse, and dogs, one of whom, a Machiavellian miniature dachshund, seems to have taken over. They live in Boston.

**Richard Woof** (1974 - 81) is joint editor of a recently published work "Handbook of Palliative Care". Since doing his G.P. training, he has worked in various hospitals in the U.K. and also in Australia. At present he is a G.P. in Droitwich, and combines this with a part-time post as lecturer in the department of general practice at Birmingham and also being clinical assistant in palliative care at St Richard's Hospice, Worcester. His brother **David** (1975 - 81), lives in America. He is married with a daughter. David and his wife are in the Salvation Army. **Andrew** (1978 - 82) took on the tenancy of the farm after their father's death.

**Kerstin Waterloh** (1982 - 84) studied biochemistry and chemistry for her degree and followed this with a Ph.D in molecular biology, leading her to the conclusion that she wanted to work at the interface of business and science. An MBA from Manchester opened the door to a position as a contracts manager in the biotech industry. At last she had reached her goal of working in both research and development and on the business side. She loved the job, but soon even the perfect job became routine and she sought new challenges. A call from a "head-hunter" led to her becoming a consultant to the pharmaceutical industry. She says that when she looks back at the day when she decided to leave Germany and come to Rendcomb for her 'A' levels with little English but a lot of determination, she realises that it was the first step on a continuous mission for new challenges. She is glad she took it.

**Sonya Naish** (1990 - 92) wrote to the headmaster last July. "It is six years since my friends and I celebrated our leaver's week-end. It has been a fun-packed and eventful six years for me; a year in India and beyond and then five hectic years at medical school in Birmingham. Finally it was all over (but really only just beginning) and another young doctor steps out into the world! I remember my two years at Rendcomb very fondly - the place where I made the greatest friends and enjoyed all the school had to offer. I enjoyed my medical course and was lucky enough to graduate with honours (MB, Ch.B). From August I shall be working at Cheltenham General Hospital for six months with Mr Poskitt and the orthopaedic surgeons. I see Taffy Renny - just finishing two years as assistant housemistress at Cheltenham Ladies College and Kate Hodgkinson who graduated this year with a first in glass and ceramics."

**Robert Sherratt** (1969 - 76) is a senior systems and software engineer with BT. He is married with three children and lives in Felixstowe.

**Simon Barrett** (1986 - 93) is with Hartwell's of Abingdon selling Rover cars. He has the impressive title of customer care manager.

**Chris Wood** (1982 - 89) wrote last May: "Since my last letter, my pilot career has really "taken-off"!! I have finished all the training course and completed my conversion course on to my aircraft type. Boeing 757 and

767. It is a bit of a shock going from a twin propeller 6-seater to a twin jet 253-seater! Size is obviously a factor, but such things as the landing speed of the 757 is greater than the top speed of the twin propeller I was flying only months previously. I have now been flying passengers out of Heathrow for six months and am thoroughly enjoying it. Destinations stretch from a very quick Manchester to far away Istanbul, and everywhere in between. A serious amount of globe-trotting has been done in the last six months!"

**Enno Schuh** (1992 - 93) told us by email that his sister, **Theda**, is studying medicine at Heidelberg University and that he finished his bank traineeship in the summer and planned to go to a German university after eight weeks' apprenticeship with an international broker in England.

**Justine Platt** (1988 - 90) writes to say that she is still enjoying her work as a senior buyer with L.L. Bean. Her brother, **Andrew**, (1986 - 93) works for Northrop Grumman on Aerospace projects, **Sara Payne** (1988 - 90) visited Justine in September and **John Carroll** (1983 - 90) is doing an exchange year with a school in Boston.

**Chris Morshead** (1974 - 77) left the Royal Navy in January and has started work with Cabair as a flying instructor.

**Graham Moore** (1971 - 78) and his wife were featured on the front page of the "Wilts & Glos". Following their wedding, they threw away convention, as the report says, and lined up against each other on the hockey pitch joined by twenty of their guests for a match on the Royal Agricultural College astroturf. Speaking before the match, Gray said the bride and groom match would be played in the true spirit of a friendly game, with both teams evenly matched. Gray has his own landscaping business and both are members of Cirencester Hockey Club.

**Julia Heron** (née Lascelles, 1989 - 91) writes: "Geoff and I are thrilled with the arrival of our first child, Sebastian, and are finally getting over sleepless nights. Geoff and I are both teaching but I am taking a break while Sebastian is a baby."

**Steven Croft** (1988 - 95) writes to say that, after graduating from Birmingham University, he is at present working for a pharmaceutical company. His brother, **Peter** (1986 - 93), has returned to Coventry to do a master's degree in automotive design. The course is demanding and includes working on projects with Jaguar and Mercedes-Benz. He plans to start a career in car design on achieving his master's degree. **Mark** (1981 - 86) is a management consultant at Cap-Gemini. He lives in High Wycombe and enjoys socialising (too much) and increasing his collection of dated Porsches. Besides that, he is an avid skier - his last adventure ending in a broken arm.

**Phil Moore** (1980 - 87) gave an informative and highly amusing talk to members of the sixth form in February on bomb disposal. He illustrated his talk with video clips of the Docklands' bombing as well as bringing examples of WWI and WWII bombs and terrorist devices. Phil is a captain in the Royal Logistics Corps bomb disposal squad.

**Nick Hoare** (1978 - 85) writes: "On leaving Rendcomb, I went to Coventry Polytechnic to study geography (a four year course). I spent one year in a relevant industry, working at Lyons' Bakery in Barnsley organising transport throughout the U.K. After graduation, I was offered a job working for the British Oxygen Company in a distribution centre, delivering textiles to M & S stores based in Swindon. After 10 months there as a supervisor, I moved to head office and then quickly on to Barnsley as a project shift manager. I went to live in Sheffield where I met my future wife and where I also got a second job at a dry-ski slope handing out very smelly ski-boots. Over the next three years, I expanded my skiing ability to qualify as an artificial ski slope instructor through two levels of standard. I then spent time in Andorra training and then qualifying as an Alpine instructor. This process was quite time consuming and during one winter entailed (having now moved to St. Albans) my driving up to Fort William on a Friday, going to the ski school on Saturday and Sunday morning and then driving home on Sunday afternoon for work on Monday! In the space of seven weeks, I made four such journeys, teaching for a total of 10 hours on snow (a pre-requisite for the qualification). I now felt I needed a change of scenery and left BOC to work as a ski guide in the Swiss Alps. A season of guiding and instructing for the local ski school was a definite change. Most clients were Arabs (the company having a base in UAE) with a few Americans, British and Bulgarians for variety! Despite a healthy tan, I decided to return and eventually got a job working on the outskirts of Barnsley (I seemed destined to return!). Kim and I returned to live in Sheffield and 18 months later I moved jobs again to work for Bibby Distribution for whom I am now operations manager at their largest site in Scunthorpe, with responsibility for a £30m turnover business and 450 staff. My brother **Chris** (1981 - 88) has worked for financial institutions in the City after

graduating from Oxford with a first. He spent 18 months living in Zurich but now seems settled living off the Mile End Road in London. He keeps in touch with **Richard Kolb.**"

**Alex Newman** (née Aylott, 1983 - 85) writes that her husband **Matthew** (1980 - 85) still farms with the family business and she has run a boutique in Chipping Sodbury for the last ten years.

**Chris Wood** (1965 - 71) has been in touch with **Hartley Moore** (1964 - 71) who still lives in Bangkok. He is using his civil engineering skills on the new underground as well as running his successful clothing business.

### News of Recent Leavers

Abbott, Toby	Geography, London University 1999
Barnes, Ralph	Drama & English, Worcester College of H.E.
Carrington, Andrew	Business studies, Aberystwyth University
Chaiwatanasirikul, Kittipong	Business administration, Richmond University
Davies, Harvey	Law, Sheffield University
Davis, Jonathan	Art foundation, Loughborough University
De Havilland-Hall, Philip	Geography & mathematics, reapplying for university, 1999
Farr, Georgina	Gap year - to study drama at university next year
Forster, Edward	Horology, University of Central England, Birmingham
Freeman, Jonathan	Psychology, reapplying to university, 1999
Garland, Jack	History & Italian, Exeter University
Gibbs, James	Anthropology & philosophy, St Andrews University
Gilyead, Rachel	English literature, University of East Anglia
Grey, Sebastian	Gap Year
Hawkins, Jake	Physics, UMIST
Hill, Timothy	Chemistry, St Edmund Hall, Oxford University
Histed, Richard	Electronic & software engineering, Leicester University
Holliday, Chas	Gap year
Howard, Annabel	Biological sciences, Imperial College, London University
Hughes, David	Chemical engineering, Swansea University
Jakobs, Elizabeth	Hotel management and tourism, Cardiff Institute of HE
Keith, Julian	International business studies, Newcastle University
King, Joel	Business information technology, Bournemouth University
Maylott, Samuel	Employment in the media
Nicholls, Hannah	Primary education, Bath Spa University College
Nye, Alastair	Gap year in India, Colchester Institute of Music 1999
Perry, Rebecca	Art foundation, Loughborough University
Peters, Sophie	Business studies, Bournemouth University
Phillips, Adam	Mathematics, Warwick University
Scarth, Christopher	International business studies, Nottingham Trent University
Sutton, Mark	Chemistry and geology, Southampton University
Taylor, Ashley	Environmental geoscience, Bristol University
Webb, Rupert	Greek and Roman studies, Exeter University
Webb, Simon	Economics with accounting, University of Central England, 1999
Williams, David	HND Music Technology, 1999

### 5th Form Leavers

Dean Armstrong-Wilde	Employment in hotel/catering trade
Adam Card	To South Africa
Benjamin Cox	Cirencester College
Tristan Day	Sherbourne School
Andrew Dolleymore	Marlborough School
Charlotte Emerson	Cirencester College
David Newby	Wrekin College
Robert Mann	Hartpury Agricultural College
Jamela Saedaldin	Cirencester College
Georgina Scot-Simmonds	Bourne School
Henry Weston	To South Africa
David Spenley	Cirencester College

## Governors and Staff, 1999

It was felt that O.R.'s might be interested in the following list:-

### GOVERNORS

Dr H.T.H.M. Phelps DCL BA ECIT FRAeS (chairman)	Mr A.O.H. Quick MA
Mrs M. Paine DipEd	Mr D.P.J. Cairns
Mr P.N.H. Gibbs MA	Major M.T.N.H. Wills DL
Mr R.D.V. Knight MA	Mrs F. Heaven
The Hon R.I.H. Wills	The Right Rev'd M.A. Mann KCVO
Mr J. Page MA	Mr H.C.W. Robinson BA DipFM
Mr D.G. Vaisey MA FSA FRHistS CBE (OR)	Mr St.J.S.L. Thomson BA ARICS
Mr A.T.K. Smail FCA	Miss E. Castle BA JP OBE
Mr T. Page BSc. FIPSD	

### STAFF

Headmaster:	Mr J.N. Tolputt, MA FRSA
Deputy headmaster, history:	Mr H. Morgan BA
Senior master, chemistry:	Mr C.J. Wood MA CChem MRSC (O.R.)
Director of studies, mathematics:	Mr P. Sykes MSc
Chaplain:	Rev'd K. Taplin BA
Housemaster Lawn House, business studies:	Mr M. Slark BA
Assistant housemaster Lawn House, French:	Mr B.L. North BA BPhil
Housemistress Park House, fashion and textiles:	Mrs S.R. Blackwell Dip Ad
Deputy housemistress Park House, geography:	Mrs N.A. Gill BA
Housemaster School House, art and design:	Mr M.S. Griffiths BA
Asst. housemaster School House, geography and maths:	Mr A. St.J. Breal BSc (O.R.)
Housemaster Stable House, mathematics:	Mr J.G. Williams BSc
Asst. housemaster Stable House, biology, sport:	Mr C. Vuolo BSc
Housemistress Godman House, English, theatre studies:	Mrs D. Dodd BA
Assistant housemistress Godman House, German:	Miss R.E. Houghton BA
Housemaster Old Rectory House, director of music:	Mr D.B. White BA LRAM
Assistant Housemaster Old Rectory House, ICT:	Mr I.G. Patterson BSc (Science) MITTED
Biology:	Mr J.H. Stutchbury BSc
Learning support:	Mrs N. Houghton Msc BA
English and drama:	Mrs K. Ewing MA
	Mr R. Murray MA
French:	Miss V.A. Hatton BA
History and librarian:	Mr M.H. Graham MA
Music:	Miss N.R. Phipps GMusRNCM
Physics:	Mrs D. Botham MA
	Dr G.J. Smith BSc DPhil
Art:	Mr T.F.C. Denny DA
Woodwork, design & technology:	Mr H. Auld BA (O.R.)
	Mrs E. Boyd BA
Chemistry, physics & ICT:	Mrs J. Gibson BSc CChem MRSC
Girls' Games:	Mrs S. Westhead Dip PE
English as foreign language:	Mrs J.D. Stutchbury BA EFL Cert
	Mr D. Sudbury BA CTEFLA
Home Economics:	Mrs E Ramsay Med
Music staff, individual lessons:-	
Oboe:	Mrs J. Baldwin
Electric guitar:	Mr P. Cordell
Clarinet, piano, recorder:	Mrs G. Day GRSM LRAM ARCM
Jazz piano:	Mrs S. Day MEd BA ARCM
Guitar:	Mr P. Dunn LRAM ARCM
Trumpet, cornet, French horn, saxophone, flute:	Mr C. Green
Organ, piano:	Mr R Lester FLCM LLCM(TD+Perf) ALCM

Flute, piano:	Mrs T. McIver
Trumpet:	Mrs S. Mills
Cello, double bass, singing:	Mrs H. Morris BA
Trumpet, cornet, trombone, tuba, horn:	Mr C. Shiner CertEd
Drums:	Mr G. Watson
Singing, clarinet:	Mrs P. Tolputt GRSM ARCM
Violin, viola, bassoon:	Miss N. Phipps
Bursar:	Lt Col J.F.A. Grey
Bursar's secretary:	Mrs S. Downie
Headmaster's secretary:	Mrs J.K. Stock BEM
Assistant to headmaster's secretary:	Mrs S.J. Crosby
Accountant:	Mrs K.M. Collins
Assistant to accountant:	Mrs S. Thomson
Marketing director:	Dr P. Shackel BSc PhD
Assistant to marketing director:	Miss J. Pratt
Resources manager:	Mrs A.E. Vickery BA
Works foreman:	Mr P. Cairns
Catering manager:	Mr R. Stott
Medical officers:	Dr S.W. Drysdale MB ChB MRGP
	Dr S. Whittle BM DCH MRGP
	Mrs H. Pritchard RGN
	Mrs J. Hunt RGN
Sisters:	