

Old Rendcombian Society

NEWSLETTER



MAY 2003

29th ISSUE

Editor
W.J.D. WHITE

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Society Officers 2002/3

At the annual general meeting in June 2002, the following officers were elected:

President:	Julian Comrie (1946-54)
Chairman:	Neil Lumby (1968-73)
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 e-mail: jane@r2g2.co.uk
Treasurer/school rep:	Chris Wood (1965-71; staff: 1976-) 9 Hammond Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos., GL54 3JF Tel: (01451) 860871 e-mail: c.j.wood@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
Committee members:	Michael Miles (1943-50) Richard Tudor (1973-80) Alex Breal (1980-87; staff 1994-) Charlotte Jeffery (1988-90)
Hon auditor:	David Williams (1966-71)
Newsletter editor:	Bill White (Staff 1961-97) 3 Jessop Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos, GL54 3JG Tel: (01451) 860943

Minutes of the 69th Annual General Meeting

Held on Sunday 30th June 2002 in Room E1 at Rendcomb College

Present:

Jane Gunner (1975-77), Neil Lumby (1968-73), Frank Dutton (1936-44), Nigel Green (1961-69), Michael Miles (1943-50), Philip Griffiths (1940-43), Peter Cockell (1943-51), John Gilchrist (1944-51), Richard Tudor (1973-80), Gerry Holden (headmaster 1999-), Julian Comrie (1946-54), Charlotte Jeffery (1988-90)

1. Apologies: Rev. Hussey (1974-78), Gerard Benson (1944-50), Sally Morris (1978-80), Douglas Payne (1940-48), Chris Wood (1965-71, staff 1976-), John Williams (1966-71), Bill White (staff 1961-97), Ted Jones (1940-48)

2. To receive the minutes of the 68th annual general meeting held on 1st July 2001 as published in the 2002 newsletter. It was proposed by Michael Miles, seconded by Richard Tudor and passed unanimously that the minutes should. be signed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

The chairman reported that copies of Rendcomb College History I were currently under way at the printers and these would be exact copies of the original publication except that they would be paperback rather than hardback.

The meeting expressed its thanks to Bill White for the excellence of this year's newsletter, this was endorsed by the headmaster on behalf of the college as he felt the publication had captured the flavour of the changes within the college. The secretary drew attention to the contribution from Frank Dutton around which many articles had been centred.

The chairman welcomed Charlotte Jeffery (née Stephens 1988-90) as a new member of the O.R. society committee.

4. To receive the Hon Treasurer's Report

In the absence of the treasurer, the secretary circulated the accounts for the year to 31st May 2002 which will be audited in July.

She explained that costs for the newsletter were comparable to last year but that due to the change in the subscription collection arrangements, the balance was much improved. From September 2001, £5 had been added to each pupil's termly bill to result in a life subscription of £105 if the pupils stayed the full 7 years. There were 'top-up' arrangements for pupils who stayed only part of this time. The secretary drew the meeting's attention to the fact that numbers in the VIth Form had reduced so if the new arrangements had not

been brought in, the society would have quickly been in deficit. Pupils did have the option to withdraw from the scheme. This year the society was benefiting both from the scheme and the 'top-up' from the leavers who had only paid one year. This top up would drop off over the next five years as the scheme filtered through. It was proposed by Julian Comrie and seconded by Richard Tudor that the accounts be adopted. This was passed unanimously.

5. Election of Officers

The secretary reported that she had received no other nominations other than that of the committee that those in post should remain there for a further term. It was therefore proposed by Julian Comrie and seconded by Frank Dutton that Neil Lumby should remain as chairman and Sally Morris should continue as vice-chairman.

6. Nomination of a Committee Member

The secretary reported that she had received no nominations other than Charlotte Jeffery who had been co-opted onto the committee. The chairman invited anyone interested to apply as there are other vacancies on the committee.

7. Travel Bursary

The secretary explained that increasingly pupils are going on the BSES expeditions abroad. These require that pupils fund raise to cover the expense of the trip which is in the order of £2,000-£3,000. This year five pupils had applied, all were doing BSES. It had therefore been impossible to choose between them and the committee had awarded each one £100. With the improved finances, it was hoped that the A.G.M. would approve the committee recommendation that the annual award be increased to £800. It had not been increased for ten years. After some discussion about increasing it even further, it was felt that there was still sufficient uncertainty about how the new finances would progress. It was therefore proposed by Michael Miles, seconded by Peter Cockell, and passed unanimously that the travel bursary annual award should be increased to £800. This could be split or given as a lump sum, at the committee's discretion.

8. Any other business

The president read out a letter of thanks from Ian Patterson who had received a framed print of the college from the society as a leaving present. He had been with the college for 14 years.

The chairman opened a discussion on how O.R.'s could support the college with careers advice and presentations. The meeting was reminded that O.R.'s had over the years given talks and, during Mr Quick's time, this had been arranged through the Industrial Society. The headmaster welcomed the initiative and suggested contact should be made with Mrs Vicki Hayward who is now in charge of careers. With Form talks could be arranged through Mike Slark.

9. The headmaster then issued a general invitation to O.R.'s to visit the college. He would be happy to show people round if he was available. The chairman thanked the headmaster both for this kind invitation and for allowing the society to use the college and its facilities for the event. The headmaster was also asked to convey the society's thanks to Mark Naylor, the catering operations manager.

The meeting closed at 3.06 p.m.

2003 A.G.M.

You are invited to attend the 70th annual general meeting of the Old Rendcombian Society on Sunday 29th June 2003 at Rendcomb College.

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive the minutes of the 69th A.G.M. held on 30th June 2002
3. To deal with matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive hon. treasurer's report update on new subscription arrangements
5. Election of officers: None
6. Nominations for 1 committee member
All proposed and seconded nominations to reach the secretary by 14 June 2003
7. Travel bursary
8. Any other business
9. Vote of thanks to the college

Dates of Future Reunions and Sports Fixtures

Sunday 29th June 2003	Cricket, lunch, bar and match
Sunday 7th December 2003 or Saturday 13th December 2003 or Sunday 14th December 2003 to be confirmed on websites: www.rendcombian.freewire.co.uk and www.rendcombcollege.co.uk	Rugby match, tea and bar
Sunday 21st March 2004	Hockey, tea and bar
Sunday 4th July 2004	Cricket, lunch, bar and match

Sports Contacts

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

Rugby:	Mike Slark 01285 831424
Ladies' hockey:	Chris Wood 01451 860871 (H) 01285 832314 (W) Email: c.j.wood@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
Men's hockey:	Alex Brealy 01285 831570 (H) 01285 832314 (W)
Ladies' netball:	Sarah Bell 01285 832314 (W)
Cricket:	David Essenhigh 01285 832314 (W) Email: c.j.wood@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
Tennis:	Steven Croft 01285 860753 Peter Croft 01285 860753

Talks to the Sixth Form

Mrs Vicky Hayward, who is in charge of careers, would be delighted if any O.R.'s would be willing to talk to the sixth form about their careers in any of the following: medicine, the art world, languages, sports, hotel management, politics, law and business management.

Please contact Vicky Hayward on:- 01285 831712

Remarks relating to items in O.R. Newsletter 28 (2002)

from M. H. C. Martin (O.R. 1926-1933)

P. 7 Mr R. N. D. Wilson: I was summoned by telegram on Wednesday 4 May 1938 to come immediately (from London) to Rendcomb to teach French in the place of Mr T. K. Wright (the amiable Marxist) who was absent ill. I duly arrived on a late train from Paddington at Kemble, where I was met by Mr D. W. Lee-Browne, completing the journey in his vintage Bentley.

It was an enjoyable and memorable fortnight. On the academic side, teaching small and eager to learn classes, and on the social side meeting up with, as an "equal" a group of very talented, professional teachers who included J. C. James, A. Granston-Richards, J. B. Fell, K. A. Gross and R. N. D. Wilson. It was the latter, Robin who, in my spare time, I saw a lot of. As a back door master he occupied two small rooms on the s.w. corner of the top floor in the main building. At that time one of my main interests was contemporary poetry, and I had quite a collection of the slim volumes that Faber and Faber published in the early thirties; and I thought I could write poetry myself one day! I found Robin a very sympathetic person, and he kindly gave me a signed copy of his 1937 Equinox ("Michael from Robin, Rendcomb, May 1938"). At the end of my two week teaching stint, the college solicitor, Barclay Sewell & Co, paid me the strange sum of £9:4s:9d (perhaps 15s:3d had to be deducted from £10.:0:0 for board and lodging). Anyway, in those days it was a handsome addition to my savings, and made it possible for me to spend the next three months in Paris, footloose and free, helped also by a favourable rate of exchange (a furnished room on the left bank came to £1 per month). Robin wrote to me, giving me introductions to Samuel Becket and Nancy Canard. I saw him for the last time when he came to Paris in charge of a small group of Rendcomb pupils on a weekend visit. We had refreshments on the terrace of the Café Dôme. I believe he joined the staff of Manchester Grammar School in 1945.

P. 23 The Local Railway: Charles G. V. Taylor (1925-32), school organist and railway enthusiast, took a group

of us up to Chedworth Roman Villa in 1928 and showed us some railway lines nearby, telling us that they were part of a failed attempt to build a railway in the area. I wonder if they are still visible? Charles seemed to know everything about railways, and was the only person in the school who had the two railway guides for those glorious pre-Lord Beeching days - the ABC and Bradshaw. If you knew how to use them, and Charles certainly did, you could be train routed from any part of the country to another, N.S.E. or W. He found a way for me to get to Lincoln by rail, taking a train from Cheltenham to Nottingham, changing there to take a train to Derby, and another change from there to Lincoln. I used this route when pupils were allowed a half term home break, cycling into Cheltenham down Charlton King's hill and up (without getting off!) back to Rendcomb. (Cars a rare sight in those days).

P. 34 "Tom" Price (1920-28): The "Tom" Price I remember was the boy who was saved from drowning by Mr D. W. Lee-Browne. One Sunday in the summer of 1927 or '28 under the charge of D.W. L-B. a group of us, including Tom (he was a big fellow, all of 16 or 17 years old) were taken to a fairly wide spot on the River Thames, near Lechlade, for a swim. Suddenly there were cries "Sir, Sir! Tom Price hasn't come up!" "Where?" shouted D.W. L-B. "There, sir. There sir!" D.W.L-B. whipped off his shoes, trousers and jacket and dived in, and in a matter of seconds, got Tom out, laid him on his stomach and pummelled the water out of him. Then they went off to a neighbouring pub (was in the "Trout Inn"?) to dry out and recover. It was a rather frightening end to the outing. That evening at prayers, J. H. Simpson talked to us about the incident and we all applauded D.W. L-B.'s heroism and Tom's recovery.

Arctic Adventure

From Richard Dunwoody (1975-81)

On the 2nd April 2003 I leave for the Arctic to take part in a polar race. Four teams of three will compete on foot or cross-country skis against each other over a 350 mile course. This mammoth hike, the first ever race of its type, will start in Resolute Bay in Northern Canada and end at the North Magnetic Pole near Isachsen. We will be man-hauling all our provisions and equipment on sleds behind us. These will weigh up to 70 kilos and we will be subjected to temperatures down to -40 degrees centigrade.

I hope to be in the winning team but, just as importantly, I am aiming to raise a substantial amount for both the Motor Neurone Disease Association and the Jarrod Cunningham SALSA Foundation.

MND is a debilitating condition that has coincidentally affected several well-known racing figures in both England and Ireland. Colin Nash, the trainer who supplied my first winner, trainer Mikey Heaton-Ellis, former jockeys Macer Gifford and John Harty (a close family friend) and Irish owner, Ollie Lehane, have all died from MND.

Also, earlier last summer, the former London Irish rugby union player, Jarrod Cunningham, was diagnosed with a form of MND and as a result the Jarrod Cunningham SALSA Foundation has been set up to offer guidance and financial support to other sufferers and their families.

I have survived a few falls as you well know, but the thought of being struck down with MND where the muscles stop working yet the brain remains totally unaffected, has made me realise that health cannot ever be taken for granted. Like most retired sportsmen having a challenge is very important to me, the Polar Race fulfils that need but also provides a unique opportunity to raise money to combat MND at the same time.

Monies raised will go to these causes for which I have set up a special bank account: The Richard Dunwoody MND Appeal. So far I have six corporate sponsors, namely Riggs Bank, Weatherbys, Diadors, Damart, Don Bruce Bookmakers and David Lloyd Leisure and there's a web-site: www.polar-race.co.uk if you'd like to follow our progress.

In anticipation, thank you so much for your kind support.

Obituaries

We record with sorrow the deaths of the following members of the society and extend our sympathy to their families.

Howard Miller (1929-31) died peacefully in Cirencester Hospital last July. He was 84. His brother, **James** (1926-31) died in 1978. His niece, Mrs Gillean White, would be pleased to hear from any friends who remember him. She can be contacted on: Gwhite1066@aol.com. The hon. secretary attended the funeral.

Douglas Payne (1940-48) died in July. **Ted Jones** (1940-48) has written the following tribute:

Douglas Payne, known to his Rendcomb contemporaries as Dugger, died from cancer of the pancreas on his

73rd birthday. He was one of four Rendcomb scholars in 1940, the three others being me, Ted (E. A.) Jones, G .H. Bye and T. T. Walters.

Douglas was very much a man of the Cotswolds and every inch a countryman. At Rendcomb he developed his lifelong interest in gardening and in other country pursuits. He stayed on at Rendcomb until 1948 and gained his school certificate in 1945 and his high school certificate in 1948.

He took on a small part of a countryman in the headmaster's (Denis Lee-Browne) production of the *Merchant of Venice* in his later years at Rendcomb, and I remember him determinedly singing "There's a hole in my bucket, Dear Liza, Dear Liza" at an evening of musical entertainment in his middle years. He was not a sportsman at Rendcomb, but he played bowls later on with considerable skill. He broke his arm in the old gymnasium in his middle years and consequently disliked gym activities thereafter. He took up bell-ringing at Rendcomb, which was an interest of the headmaster at that time, and it became a life-long interest for him. He served for a couple of years in the Royal Navy for his national service as an acting leading seaman in the navy's educational and vocational education branch, as did several of his Rendcomb colleagues, including me.

On leaving the navy he enrolled at St Paul's Teacher Training College in Cheltenham on a two year course. He was married to his wife, Betty, on 14 August 1954, and in due course they had two sons.

His first teaching post was in 1954 at the Tysoe primary school in Warwickshire, where he and his family stayed for three years. In 1957 the family moved on to an all age school at Cricklade, where Douglas held a Post of Responsibility. In 1960 the family moved to Lydiard Millicent in Wiltshire, where Douglas became headmaster of the village primary school, and stayed in post until his retirement in 1989. During the 1980s Douglas achieved an Open University bachelor of arts degree, and he often praised the O.U. for its very good range of educational activities.

During his retirement years he became chairman of the local Purton Historical Society and for several years was an enthusiastic player of bowls at Purton Bowls Club. Earlier, at Cricklade, he had played bowls for the county of Wiltshire. Douglas continued his bell-ringing activities at both Cricklade and at Lydiard Millicent. The family are continuing Douglas's support for the restoration of All Saints church bells at Lydiard Millicent and would like donations in his memory to be made to this fund. Donations should be sent to Joe Ricketts, Captain of All Saints Bell Tower, 9 the Beeches, Lydiard Millicent, Swindon, Wilts, SN5 3LT Douglas was a good family man and a true Christian, who remained a real countryman and a keen gardener for all of his life.

He was a very conscientious and active member of the old Rendcombian society after his retirement and he served on the OR society committee for several years. He greatly valued the educational and cultural aspects of Rendcomb and he also greatly appreciated his years at Rendcomb.

Addendum: Doreen and I went down to visit Betty Payne and her son, Tim, on Tuesday 20 August and we had lunch and tea at 13 Buryfield; we later went to Doug's grave at Chesterton cemetery at Cirencester. I placed a wreath of flowers on his grave from the old Rendcombian society, for which he had done good service as a committee member since his retirement from school teaching.

David Butler (1970-77) died in February 2002. He was a tutor at Cardiff University.

Frank Fry died peacefully in a nursing home in Inverness last May. He joined the ground staff at Rendcomb in 1952 together with his wife, Emily, and son, Michael. He worked for the college for 44½ years and, when he retired, moved up to Scotland to be near his son and grandson. **Bill White** gave an address at the memorial service at Rendcomb in May. Frank will be kindly remembered by Rendcombians who were at the college during his long period of service.



Iain Richardson, Frank Fry and Tony Partridge planting a tree in memory of Emily Fry

John Middleton Murry (1936-44) died in April 2002. After leaving Rendcomb in 1944, he served in the Royal Navy until the end of the war when he went up to Brasenose College, Oxford, to study Anglo-Saxon and English. His father was a famous critic and editor, but John, who started writing short stories while still at Rendcomb, soon established himself as an author in his own right. O.R.s of his era will probably know of his autobiography *One Hand Clapping*, a copy of which he presented to the library. His wife, Ruth, died in 2002: he is survived by his two daughters. Detailed tributes appeared in the national press.

David Haes (1926-29) died peacefully in June 2002, aged 90. His daughter says that her father was very pleased to see a picture of himself in the picture of the cricket team sent in by John Eyles' son for the 27th issue.

Oliver Morel (1930-34) died in February this year aged 87 years. He was a pupil of the famous English craftsman Edward Barnsley before joining the staff at Rendcomb for a time during the war to teach woodwork.

Russell Jones (1956-64) died in March 2002. He was captain of rugby and hockey at Rendcomb and played for the West of England U19 hockey team and for Gloucestershire U19 at rugby, possibly the first Rendcombian to play rugby for the county. He went on to study psychology at Bangor University where he played rugby for the 1st XV. He had suffered from health problems for many years, which prevented him from following a regular career and which tragically caused him to take his own life.

John Sumsion (1942-47) died in February 2003 at his home in Leicestershire, aged 74.

His brother, **Richard** (1947-54) has sent the following tribute:

When he came to Rendcomb in the middle of World War Two, John had spent the previous two years with his two brothers and their American mother in the U.S.A. Having earlier been in the choir at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, he carried on as a chorister at St. Thomas' Church in New York.

Why Rendcomb? Because John's mother and father (organist at Gloucester Cathedral) were pre-war friends of the Lee-Brownes, through the further musical connection of Freda Lee-Browne's father, Frederic Austin. John flourished at Rendcomb, both academically and as a sportsman, and he did even better after prevailing in an argument with authority that, having poor eyesight, he might be allowed to wear glasses. J. C. James (history, 1931-69) considered him a star pupil, and used Sumsion's clear-as-crystal notes as a basis for teaching many following years; of course the notes were dictated by James in the first place. His pupil repaid the compliment by winning an open scholarship to Clare College and, after two years' national service in the army, by achieving at Cambridge a double first in history. Then a Fullbright Scholarship took him to Yale for a year's economics, followed by a year at Cornell to teach it all back again. What to do next? Returning to England (with 25 feet run of books, for which his brothers constructed a new bookcase), John explored the possibility of a career in the diplomatic service, but was in fact recruited by K Shoes, on the look out for management material. Their two year programme of training covered the shoe business from heel to toe and included six months with a *bottier* in Paris, learning to make bespoke shoes entirely by hand. John worked alongside four craftsmen, all communists. He perfected his French, and developed his palate. An undoubted attraction of K Shoes was to live in Kendal (the gateway to the lakes!) which John enjoyed hugely. He made the most of the spectacular surroundings and found plenty of opportunities for playing hockey, making music on piano or flute and singing. With his first wife Annette he raised four children. Much later he met his second wife Hazel and thereby gained two step-daughters.

At K Shoes his progress was continuous, including appointment to the board of directors, and over the years he had various important responsibilities; at one time in charge of production of ladies' shoes, and at another for buying leather from places as far apart as Denmark and India. He was also responsible for setting up the computer systems for the company, and this experience would later prove valuable in a quite different field. In 1981 the take-over of K Shoes by Clarks forced an apocalyptic change of career. At the age of 53, after 27 years with the company, John found himself swept out by the new broom but, after some anxious casting about, a surprisingly fitting opportunity was opened to him. From well before the war, a campaign by authors had been waged to recover some recompense for their books being borrowed from libraries. Their claims were impracticable until the arrival of the computer era. However, in passing the Public Lending Right Act in 1979 the government decided on a scheme, and by 1981 they were looking for a registrar to implement it. Under the Act, authors were to be paid, from a central fund, amounts based on the numbers of times their books were borrowed from public libraries. John Sumsion's appointment as the first Registrar of Public Lending Right was sceptically received by the book trade and by the librarians who thought his experience as a shoe maker would be little help. How wrong they were! John set up the PLR office in Stockton on Tees. (Decentralisation was in vogue). He recruited staff and, crucially, oversaw the design and installation of computers to handle the data which would flow in, by authors registering their books and from a representative sample of libraries which would record the books being borrowed. With energy and commitment he ironed out wrinkles in the scheme.

He rapidly established an efficient organisation which listened patiently to the authors' concerns and sorted their claims fairly, while always remembering that the cost of administering PLR would reduce the pot of money, some £2 million in the first year, available to be paid out. Indeed, after the mechanism had become established, the secretary of the Society of Authors' quoted tribute was "quite literally flawless". Winning over the librarians was perhaps a harder task, but it was achieved by gathering and feeding back information that previously had been unobtainable. The PLR statistics were so carefully analysed and presented that librarians found themselves in possession of a new management tool. Similarly the registrar could tell publishers very useful information about the market for library books. Possibly John's best legacy has been the healing of the rift between authors and librarians, who had all become somewhat entrenched adversaries from the earlier PLE campaign. He was awarded an O.B.E. On leaving PLR at the end of ten years at the helm, John moved to Leicestershire on appointment as director of the library information and statistics unit at Loughborough University, and after five years he became a senior fellow. These final years were overshadowed by the onset of multiple myeloma, a form of leukaemia, the same disease which overtook D. W. Lee-Browne. For four and a half years John, and Hazel, showed tremendous determination to carry on doing as much as could be managed, through alternate periods of treatment and remission. He continued to be active in his local church, travelling, making music and taking every delight in his extended family.

AROPS (Association of Representatives of Old Pupils' Societies)

For the third year in succession over one hundred representatives attended the AROPS conference. The chairman, John Kidd, Old Portmuthian, welcomed participants which included representatives from as far away as Carlisle and the Isle of Man.

The headmaster, Mr Stephen Meek, welcomed representatives to Hurstpierpoint College and gave the opening address. His own experience indicated to him that some societies gave little thought to inviting members of staff to join them. He was of the opinion that societies should endeavour to create an inclusive community and that members of staff were a vital part of that community.

Margaret Carter-Pegg, Old Crohamian, introduced Dr Alistair Cooke, general secretary of ISC (The Independent Schools Council) who gave a stimulating and wide ranging perspective on the concerns and challenges facing the independent sector. A detailed report of the conference including Dr Cooke's speech has been sent to your AROPS representative. The second session dealt with websites. It was chaired by Joe Kearns, Old Priorian, and included a live presentation of the Haileybury Society website ably demonstrated by David Wright, the site manager.

After lunch Melanie Whitfield, Old Embleian, gave representatives the benefit of her experience in "Attracting the Younger Member". Her young and vibrant society had no difficulty in attracting younger members and many in the audience felt there was something to take back with them from her excellent presentation. The final session of 'Any Questions?' was held by popular demand. Chaired by Tim Cunis, Old Pauline, a panel of AROPS committee members covered numerous topics. As usual participation from representatives attending was a feature of the discussions. There is no doubt that the session could have gone on well past the finishing time so engaged was the audience.

The chairman closed the conference saying that he hoped to see many representatives at the AGM at Westminster School on Tuesday, 19 November. The 2003 conference will take place on 17 May 2003 at the School of St. Mary and St. Anne in Staffordshire.

Tea and tours of the college followed.

The annual dinner took place in the evening at Hurstpierpoint College when thirty representatives entertained by guest speaker, George Hill, former president of the Hurst Johnian Club who, before retirement, had been headmaster at a number of choir schools.

(The Old Rendcombian Society subscribes to AROPS, and representatives attend conferences from time to time - Ed)

Rendcomb Reminiscences

Last year's articles have inspired further interesting reflections on O.R.s time at Rendcomb.

From **John Neads** (1924-30): "I thought I would add a few of my thoughts on the Rendcomb of my day. I agree with the first of **Julian Comrie**'s (1946-54) points: it is still for me the education and life philosophy that it imparted that has influenced my life. But let my brief notes comment on the masters that schooled me. **Sidney Shimmin** (a Manxman) who trained the choir and tried to impart some interest in art and classical

music. At the time it didn't have much relevance but it did leave a message; look and listen. It has been a worthwhile message for later years when the opportunity arose to visit both museums and art galleries around the world.

The 'Beak' DWLB whose watchword in my memory was - "guts and tolerance". If we tackled a project-pursue it to the utmost but be tolerant of the disadvantaged. I think it paid off for me because when the job was well done it led to preference in the future. He encouraged our enjoyment of outdoor life and the building canoes and their safe use both on the lake and on the Severn at Tewkesbury.

That got us into Movietone News one year. **Oliver Morel** (1930-34) reminds me of the butterfly collection* which I believe was donated by his father who was an explorer in Africa. Oliver taught me some of the skills of cabinet making and to have a love of wood and that still applies today as this house which I designed is finished inside in a variety of woods. Skiing was another enterprise he introduced to me and helped me to



make my own hickory skis just like the examples over the staircase of 'Ski Club GB'. He also encouraged me to read further than the thrillers of the library and explore architecture. 'Dickers' (**A.G.G. Richards**, staff 1931-46) - Can you imagine chaperoning six teenagers overseas for the first time and on bicycles through Normandy to Paris; he did it well and the impressions of the cathedrals and palaces still linger on. One small vignette is chasing the chickens off our beds at the YHA on the first night in France. Imagine our surprise on literally bumping into 'Umda' (**Mr Wilson**) on a Paris street. Yes, we cycled all the way which seems inconceivable today. He also guided me into hockey, which I managed to play for every ship in which I served.

Three of us were engineering students and to receive instruction in mechanical drawing, every Monday afternoon we cycled to Cheltenham Tech to be instructed by one Thos. V. Skinner (wearing a trilby hat). Chasing the Black and White bus from Cowley Manor turning was an occasion to ogle the girls going back to afternoon classes at the Ladies College and the excuse was that it made cycling easier in the slipstream of the bus. Imagine too our surprise one Sunday afternoon when straying into the drive at Cowley Manor on seeing a set of silver race horse models and fences along the bonnet of the Bentley. For the two weeks after our final exams we were schooled by a **Mr Young**, who had come from Kandi in Ceylon, and he gave us some insights into things other than class subjects such as the fund of numbers other than the fodder of algebra and more unusual into the basics of heraldry.

Cycling was the way of life in those years and I cycled to London to take my Inter Bsc practicals at London University laboratories in Bedford Square.

I did one Easter stint of chicken farmer with all the business of boiling up the food in a cauldron behind the stables at The House (The Old Rectory L-B) and I stayed in **Katy Manifold's** room. Is the fig tree still in the courtyard at The House? Mention of **Mrs Bassnett** brings to mind collecting chestnuts after games on Saturday from the Long Bottom tree plantations for roasting on the library fire in the evening. On one occasion we also collected a suitcase of mushrooms in the same area and then pestered her to cook them for us and we ate them without untoward effects.

I mentioned once before that one or two of the more daring of us climbed up the exterior stonework by the library corner to the roof. We were fortunate to neither get caught or fall. We also knew the subterranean passageways from the back stairs through and out via the boiler room; and the dairy was not safe from our midnight raids.

Apropos of nothing it reminds me of the morning run; in my memory it was around the 'Temple' followed by a cold bath. The epitome of macho then was to stay in bed until the first breakfast bell, then, in pyjamas, race



around the Temple - with no short cut -, slide in one end of the bath and straight out the other end, leaving plenty of water on the floor, take a look at a towel and throw on clothes over a damp body and enter the dining hall raking the hair and beating the closing door.

There was also a master living beyond the sports field probably where Rendcomb airfield now is; his name I think was **Coleman** and he rigged up a wind-powered electrical system to light his house. The Inge family provided the services at the church with **Miss Inge** at the organ (no puns please) and the **Rev. Inge** giving the sermon; so we much preferred the Litany service.

When I last visited the college it was a quiet midday in late August 1971 with no-one about; my daughter called by some time soon after to take a photograph (now lost) so my real memory of Rendcomb and its life is that era touched upon here. That will be more than enough to jog somebody's memory!

* See **John Webb's** (1954-63) article about the butterfly collection in the 2001 newsletter

From **Martin Butler** (1941-47)

I have just read the fascinating article on Rendcomb's history in the newsletter. I know the reference to the Hardwicke design but two years ago when visiting an inn in Painswick I saw a print of the lovely great late 17C house he demolished! Last year the inn was under new management and the print was no longer hanging, so my information is tantalisingly useless! I support **A.C.A. Gilmour's** (1932-35) appeal to students of Lee-Browne's day to show appreciation for that remarkable and eccentric man. One recollection which could illuminate his special pupil management skills was that he accepted an appeal from my 21 year old sister that I should be kept on for 6th form studies after my parents had got nowhere - but that parents are not always the best and most objective people when the quality of their off-spring are criticised! I consider myself fortunate indeed to have experienced that unique and remarkable school.



From **Neil McGregor-Wood** (1939-45)

Reading what **Peter Binks**, (1935-41), **Michael Levett** (1934-42), and **Douglas Payne** (1940-48) wrote in recent newsletters brought back wartime memories of Rendcomb. These days one tells one's grandchildren about them and of course one recalls the happiest experiences rather than those less happy ones.

What a small school it was - some 85 boys - far too small to make it viable as I learnt when I later became an independent school governor. But it meant small classes, the history/English 6th in my year had only 4 boys, just like a university tutorial when I went up to Cambridge. And the quality of teaching was on the whole superb, such staff as Robin

Wilson (1934-44) who taught English and inspired one with a love of literature, **John James** (1932-69) whose teaching of history was outstanding (and how good he was at "spotting" likely exam questions but not earlier than the day before the exam!) **Ernest Neal** (1934-46) who made biology for non-science boys interesting, **Kate or Kitty Manifold** who did us well in French and was decorative to behold as well! Mind you the teaching staff had some pretty bright material to work on (with a few exceptions - not "university scholarship material" so my parents were told!) The honours board shows the number of Oxbridge awards for those years - a remarkable number for a small school. Then there was **Molineaux**, (1933-50) called Molly, the art master - a regular walking companion of **Wilson** - who was very gifted (*see photo*). He ran a puppet group, made the dolls, constructed a portable stage and wrote and directed plays. He was also a portrait painter and painted a very pretty young mother who, with her infant, was a paying guest in the Rectory while her husband was away in the army. I got into deep water with **Lee-Browne**, the then headmaster, when contrary to orders played a singles tennis game rather than doubles one afternoon with her on the court in front of the main entrance! Well she was jolly attractive, don't you know and I couldn't get another couple to join in! That's the story!

I well remember the Spartan side of life at the school. A walk before breakfast for juniors and a run round Journey's End followed by a cold shower for seniors. That was soon discontinued because it increased young appetites in those days of rations. To make up for lack of domestic staff, boys were split into three teams and one week in three one got up early to sweep and dust the halls and classrooms, replenish the log baskets, throw the windows open wide to let the dust out, as well as the heat during winter months! Boiled young nettles were served as a second vegetable at one meal - never to be repeated! Slices of bread and margarine were covered with sugar or meat paste bought from the village shop after one's pot of jam for the term (!!! - ed.) was finished. However the food was quite adequate for growing boys in spite of shortages. To supplement the diet, a number of boys were given a spoonful of Virol or some other malt concoction each morning by the matron in her first floor room at the top of main stairs! (Like Mary Poppins



and her spoonful of sugar!), but this never stopped the usual spring term epidemic.

1940 was the year of the great freeze. Trees and bushes were adorned with a tracery of wonderful thick icicles. The park was decimated with fallen trees and branches and provided the school with a plentiful supply of timber for logs and work for punishments. It was also the year when one **Roland Wood**, (1939-46) known for some unfathomable reason as Bunny, went head first on a toboggan into a dry Cotswold stone wall and had to be rushed to Dr Gladstone at his home by the main road to have a large slice of skin in his head stitched up. The main building was made for daredevil escapades. One evening there was a chase round the top floor ledge, **Lee-Browne** never discovered that. On another a well built boy - **Roger Brain** (1937-45) - I think slipped off a first floor ledge, landed on his backside and got up and walked off unharmed.

Lee-Browne was a colourful character, strikingly handsome and attractive and charming to young mothers, and a bit of an actor. One sensed that he dominated the school, both staff and boys. It has been said that he was particularly good in handling junior boys and encouraging the shy and troubled ones, but not so good at coping with some of the budding teenage adults who had ideas of their own and could question his (confirmed in **John James'** history of Rendcomb). Certainly he overdid the late evening sessions in his smoke filled study apparently looking for problems with some small boy where often none existed. One is reminded of the



cartoon of a boy coming out of the headmaster's study being asked by another boy: "whacked or psychoed?"

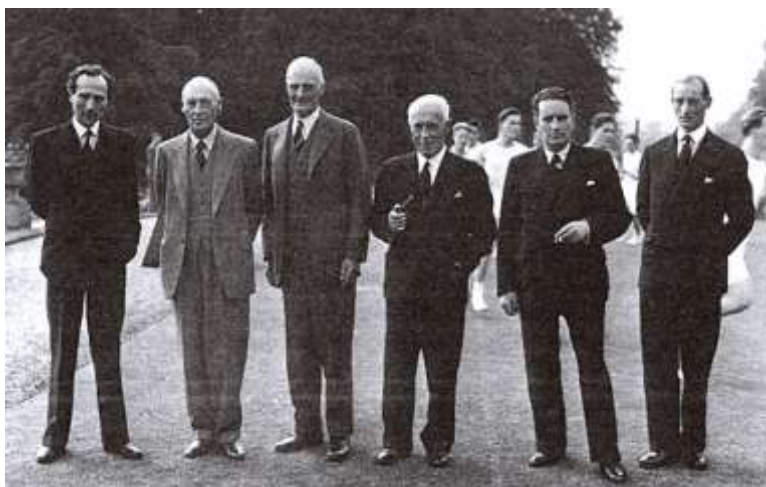
Much has been written about the general meeting and some have doubted its value. On the whole I think it was good in encouraging boys to take on responsibilities and be answerable to their peers for those functions. Where I think **Denis Lee-Browne** went wrong was in using the meeting as a court for judging boys' misdemeanours, that was his job not the school community's.

Douglas recalled the Air Training Corps' section run by **Dickers** - I too always wondered why the school didn't have an O.T.C. unit which would have been more helpful for many boys. My one vivid

recollection of the ATC was of going with another boy to the RAF station at South Cerney and asking the pilot prior to take off whether one should count up to ten before pulling the parachute rip cord! "Pull the bloody thing straight away, lad!" - and then being taken up in an old Anson known as a "flying glasshouse" after switching from another Anson whose engines sounded pretty dicey! He said the second aircraft wasn't too hot either! Years ago in the '70s I showed one of my sons, then aged 12, over the school and he was greatly taken with it but instead he went to the school where **Anthony Quick**, **Lee-Browne's** successor, was head; so an opportunity of having another McGregor-Wood at Rendcomb was missed. That young man now helps to bring news from trouble spots like Afghanistan and Israel.

From **Michael Levett** (1934-42)

Sixty years after leaving, every issue of the old Rendcombian society newsletter evokes a host of nearly forgotten memories. In fact it is 68 years since I arrived in that still familiar entrance to the college a small tremulous ten year old about to embark on a new, very important stage of life.



Founder's Day 1951.
David Wills,
Lord Dulverton,
Col. Godman,
Sir Robert Sinclair,
D. W. Lee-Browne,
Hon. Anthony Wills
(later Lord Dulverton)

So, who are some of the people who so profoundly influenced me? Among those mentioned in the 28th issue of 2002 was **Robin Wilson**, the wonderful Irish poet who inspired in us a love of literature which is everlasting, not only in class but also in his sitting room for those lucky enough to be in the top floor dormitories. We assembled in pyjamas, dressing gowns and slippers to hear him read James Joyce, Dylan Thomas and others who were discussed at length with eager passion.

K.A.C. Gross (1934-39) was unfortunate to have me as a pupil for Latin and my ineptness and inattention caused a well deserved box on the ears which is remembered with nostalgia rather than recrimination. Fortunately for me war service personnel were excused the need for Latin on entry into Cambridge for 1946 matriculation.

Denis Lee-Browne, the long serving headmaster, deserves more than a passing mention as his influence was felt throughout the school in a very positive manner. His study is well remembered not only for canings but also for weight and height measurements at the beginning of each term. There were, however, more conventional and learned occasions when seniors were invited for serious discussions on a variety of books and topics including the facts of life.

Another connection was his skilful play directing, especially *Sweeney Todd the Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, which was a good chance to see him in action as a teacher. Once picked as a cast member, we could wander at will behind the curtains but of special significance are the times we would climb up into the "flies" feeling surprisingly bold and isolated.

Douglas Payne's account of wartime Rendcomb also revives scenes of those fallen trees after major ice storms, cancelled sports, individual jam pots jealously guarded, midnight raids on the kitchen and, yes, lots of extra house duties. I even have copies of those I made up as the duty prefect, although I don't consider myself as a pack rat. The founder's day programme for Saturday June 17th 1939, see below, also makes for interesting reading as it includes details of the canoe regatta which had been mentioned in an earlier note, along with a photograph of the event.

Doug's article also brought back to mind **A.G.G. Richards** who miraculously coached me through to a credit in mathematics in the junior school certificate in one term after having failed it completely only a short while previously. **E.G. Neal** was, again, very much a part of life at the science laboratory for sixth form work, which also included more graphic details of 'things we should know'. He also taught first aid classes in preparation for more warlike times which the school itself was lucky enough to avoid. And what about fellow students whose names are legion although contact with most has now been lost? One exception was a Christmas card this year from **Basil Lumby**, last seen in 1942. He enclosed a photograph of three O.R.s who, although on holiday, still looked remarkably well groomed. On the left is older brother **Peter Levett**, **Basil Lumby**, yours truly and sister Rosemary Lumby. I was reminded of a motor boat ride for the four of us which broke down and, in attempting to start it, the crank handle flew overboard - without too many recriminations, but much loss of pride.

In the early thirties Rendcomb College was chosen for its modern and comprehensive approach to education which may well explain why its impression has been so positive and enduring over many decades. School duty groups are now part of history - here is an original list sent in by **Michael Levett** (1934-42) when he was a group leader.

M A C Levett	East Late Duties	February 2nd
Trayhurst	A Sweeper	<u>Groups</u>
Bedwell	C Swab	A <u>Levett</u>
Smith	D Sweeper	Dorms 1-11
Beck	C Swab	Sweep & Dust 6
Morris	N Sweeper	<hr/>
Alder	E Vim	B <u>Tuch</u>
Plenderleith	E Vim	Halls, Drying Room
Harrison	B Sweeper	Sweep and Dust 4
French	C Swab	<hr/>
Draper P.	B Sweeper	C <u>Ivens</u>
Groves	D	Bathrooms and Changing
Davis	E Vim	Rooms alternate with lab
Elson	D Sweeper	Swab 4
Butlin	D Sweeper	<hr/>
Henshaw J	D Sweeper	D <u>Palmer</u>
Bech S	A Sweeper	Dining Room floor
Dodwell	B Mop	Laying dinners, stairs
Henshaw	D Mop	Back and main corridors
Lane	C Sweeper	Sweep, mop and dust
Walters	D Duster	6
Carus-Wilson C	A Duster	<hr/>
Baxby	C	E <u>Plenderleith</u>
Hanney	A	Vimmers-Vim 3
Kendel	F Waggermen	<hr/>
Williams	F Waggerman	F <u>Williams</u>
		Waggers
		Collect Dust 2
		<hr/>



Peter Levett, Basil Lumby, Michael Levett and Rosemary Lumby

Travel Bursary

From **Joanna Hindley** (1999-2001), September 2002 - An account of my experiences in a Tanzanian school:

I'd always envisaged Africa as this romantic ideal, vast dry plains; wandering tribesmen and a thrill of unexpected adventure in the air. The Africa I encountered, however, was far from that with its absolute poverty and lush vegetation; yet, despite that, the experience was far more than I imagined it could be and I learnt things that the western culture has lost in its race for development. Africa may currently be falling apart both economically and politically, yet at its core it truly embraces the meaning of friendship and trust. It is in the villages, where they have nothing, that a traveller can witness the important things in African society and the constant struggle, which is fought so bravely. The eight months I spent in east Africa during my gap year is

something I will always treasure and for me the expression of Africa truly 'getting under your skin' has certainly proved true.

I taught English literature at Kiriki secondary school in the heart of the Pare Mountains, which is situated in northern Tanzania, East Africa. The school was a mixed Muslim boarding school and lay within the basin of a valley. The entire ethos of the school is profoundly different from that of any school in the western world; in some respects it could be said to resemble a British school of the late 18th century in its methodology and approach to teaching. This ethos can also be entirely summed up by Kiriki's school motto of 'Educate or Perish'. Punishment is brutal and unrelenting. The cane was never far from the backside of some offending pupil and to see the welts on the body of a grown man sobbing on the floor is not something to be lightly disregarded. Facial punishment is acceptable and anything remotely violent is seen as a way of educating the offender. Despite having to behave in accordance with the title of 'Madam', I made some fantastic friends amongst the students and equally amongst the staff. The people I became close to were both warm and open and had none of the personal barriers that so many people have in our society as a form of protection. They need each other in a sense that the British population don't; for if they lack the bond of friendship and trust then they have very little else. I was taught many Swahili words and a lot about the various customs of different tribes, which is hugely varied, as you would expect. Despite being so tribally based, the Tanzanian society has primarily only 2 religions; Christianity and Islam. Kiriki secondary school admits both although is fundamentally a Muslim school and my placement partners were the only two women not to wear the Muslim veil.

The school day begins at 5.00 a.m. and concludes at 10.30 p.m. This is interspersed with an hour for lunch, 2 hours for school cleanliness and chores and 2 hours of compulsory prayer, worship and religion lectures. It should also be remembered that this school, as are the rest of the schools in Tanzania, is based on a British system left over from colonisation. All subjects are taught in English despite most students struggling to form a basic sentence independently and all teachers' reference books are written in English since the majority are aid handouts. Most of the students can boast 4 languages with English being the fourth since nearly all have two mother tongue languages and then the national language of Swahili followed by English; some can claim fluency in even more. They are bright hard working children that truly value education; for, in one of the poorest countries in the world, education is the only thing that separates them from a life of poverty and subsistence. Even those that are educated fight for survival but they have a firmer footing in the fight. Despite their hard work the students find all exams incredibly difficult and most barely manage to pass. Yet, this is not due to a lack of effort or a lack of intelligence; it is because the lessons are taught and the exams are written and answered in a language they can barely understand.

My gap year offered me the opportunity really to experience life in one of the poorest countries in the world instead of just passing through it and seeing the sights that are offered to tourists. The Pare Mountains are situated in the Kilimanjaro region, which, as the name suggests, boasts the spectacular 5996 meter high Mount Kilimanjaro; termed the roof of Africa, it is an amazing sight. I and my partner, Aimee, took a study group of 15 students on a six-day trek reaching the summit at 9 a.m. on the 19th May. It was an incredible experience that required more determination than physical strength to reach Uhuru peak.

During the Easter holiday I spent 3 weeks travelling down the Kenyan coast, starting at Malindi and travelling down to Wasini Island through Mombasa - a beautiful stretch of coastline, which is significantly unspoilt when you consider what a tourist destination the southern area of the coast is. Yet it was the only time in my 8 months that a Western influence was truly discernible.

At the end of my teaching placement, I spent a month travelling around Uganda, a fortnight in the lake Victoria region, with some time spent in the Sesse islands in the northern tip of lake Victoria, a few weeks in Zanzibar, truly a hard life! The travelling was amazing fun and yet could not compare with my time spent as a teacher in Kiriki secondary school. The Africa I lived and taught in is not the Africa that is portrayed by the media or the Africa that most westerners visualise. It is a place of incredible warmth where all outsiders are welcomed into the fold and appreciation and gratitude is displayed for the smallest of kindnesses. I had the most incredible time in a wonderful place and would spend my life there as of tomorrow - if university weren't beckoning.

(A full account, with photographs, appeared in the Wilts. and Glos. Standard - Ed)

Arctic Norway Expedition

From Cindy Cheung

Expedition life was something new for me. I slept in a tent for six weeks. The longest time I spent in the tent was 43 hours due to the bad weather. Simple things became more difficult - preparing a meal seemed to take twice as long as it does at home. Having army type rations made me feel sick, but I still survived from the dehydrated food and soon I got used to it although I got bored with the taste. (Most of the food we had tasted of paraffin). Never before had I appreciated how tasty a piece of bread can be!

I also needed to cope without a shower for absolutely ages. The smell of feet in the tent was a nightmare; even so, we had got to be patient, because we soon found that it was even worse when your tent mate farted non-stop!

If we were lucky enough we might get a sunny day, so have a chance to wash our clothes, However, we had to do all the washing in the freezing stream. A stream where we cleaned/washed our bodies, a stream where we washed the utensils, a stream where we got drinking water from!

I was in the Survey Fire, a group of 14. The first difficulty we found was not knowing how we were going to survey, but we walked 25km from base camp to the survey camp. We walked 8 hours a day for 2 days. On our walk we needed to cross loads of rivers, going up and down hills, because we carried the rucksacks and the weather was absolutely appalling which made the walk a lot harder. I found blisters on my feet after the first day we walked, which was really painful! Fortunately we arrived at the survey camp safely.

Survey Camp - that was what we called that place where survey fire had particularly chosen to spend ten days to do surveying, so we thought that that place was belonging to our fire. In addition, survey camp was a German gun-emplacement; we saw lots of bunkers and historical remains.

We had a morning off and soon started working. The first thing we needed to do was to get used to the equipment. There were no

computers, all the equipment we used was most primitive. None of us (Yes) knew how to do surveying. We listened very carefully to our leader and did a practice one before we did it for real.

We started surveying the next morning, our aims were to produce a map for the local school. We split up into three teams, each worked in a particular area. Everyone was so excited and enthusiastic. We worked so hard and measured the distance and height of that land. By the end of the first day, we all came back and traced the things we did onto a master copy. Something that surprised us was we managed to join the coastline perfectly. Considering that the coastline was the most difficult thing to do, our leaders were so pleased. We aimed at getting the map done within 10 days; we managed to finish it in only 7 days.

We left the survey camp and continued our expedition. We experienced a day which nobody could forget. We were walking along the coastline, but we avoided being too close to the sea, so we always went up and down the hills and through some 'jungle'. However we were stuck on the rocky mountain. We carried on walking for ages, but still could not get out of it. That day, the weather was really bad, which made our walk even more difficult. We slipped and fell over so many times and got a few bruises. Although eventually we got out of it, we couldn't find a suitable place to stay overnight, because we couldn't find a place near a stream to get drinking water. Everyone was so depressed and tired and we were absolutely soaking. We searched for a long time, eventually we found a place to stay, everyone was exhausted and fell asleep straight away. We didn't want to cook the dinner, didn't talk and didn't write our diaries, which we normally did, because all these things involved the brain working. (We used up all the energy while we were concentrating on the rocks). We walked for another few days to the 'mountain camp'. We spent 2 days in the mountain camp and did some ice training, so that we could get used to the ice-equipment before we actually got up onto the snow. I learnt a lot in those two days. We fixed the crampons onto our walking boots, put helmets onto our heads for protection; wore harnesses with karabiners; got ice-axes etc. As we got all the kit ready, we then split up into two groups and roped ourselves up and walked up on the ice cap under the guidance of expert leaders.

I was so excited because it was the first time I had walked on real snow, but I found it very difficult. After we went up about 500 meters, something happened to me. I fell down a crevasse. It was a shock for me, because my feet were dangling free. The people on the same rope as mine tried to pull me out. We then carried on with the walk. We saw nothing else but snow. We took four hours to climb up to 1035 meters on an icecap. The view up there was amazing.

We camped on the icecap for a week. It was the first time I have slept on ice. The feeling was cold and wet. Luckily during the days we spent on the ice, the weather was absolutely superb. In the morning, the sun was shining, so we took every opportunity to dry our smelly wet clothes. Nobody would believe us that in the Arctic Circle we went up to the icecap and sunbathed. The feeling was incredible.



Meg Barne, Cindy Cheung, Sarah Rudderham and Alice Hughes

From **Meg Barne**

To Gullgrüver - "We spent a day in base camp recuperating and repacking, I persuaded Chris, our leader, to help me go through my rucksack to reduce the weight. This was because my rucksack was one of the heaviest in the fire and I wasn't carrying the radio or batteries or even a fire medical kit! I took a huge amount out of my rucksack - I wasn't even allowed to take soap or deodorant! My rucksack weighed nothing (until I put the tent and another 7 days rations back in, and Anna then handed me the medical kit for my share of kit equipment!) We then spent two days learning the basics of ice and mountain safety for the time we would be spending on the glacier later on. The best bit was putting crampons on for the first time, and instead of slithering around on the snow as usual, I stuck! We had one final night at base camp which was quiet as every previous evening there had been at least one other fire for us to chat with (in the large Polish tent that was meant to be used for storing rations) and to challenge them at rounders! The next morning we were woken at 6.30 a.m. by the raucous yells of Sam - not quite as scary as Damian shaking our tents and screaming at us at 4 a.m., but nearly. We then set off around the headland on the route that George, Jim and Kayleigh had planned - along 28km of road. This was depressing at first, but we all cheered up when, as leaving base camp, the sun came out. Hannah started singing along to the tape player she had rescued from the container, well not everyone was pleased by this, but I was responsible for singing along to Scub-7 just as loud as her and Mary! We realised at lunchtime that we were doing at least 6km an hour and so would reach the campsite well ahead of schedule. This was reckoned upon before walking on tarmac constantly really began to affect people and before Jim had his 30 minute stop at a ferry hut that we passed! We did arrive at our campsite at 5.30 p.m. instead of 9.30 p.m., but Sam had 11 blisters. Jim had to crawl everywhere, and as we later found out Mary had a blister the size of an egg on her heel. In fact Hannah (in her trainers) and I were the only two not affected (hmm...perhaps Will Young does have magic healing powers!) I was now sharing a tent with Sam and Damian, which proved to be very funny especially as Jim and George unofficially moved in. This was the valley which I returned to during my 5-day trek at the end of the expedition. Another early start, but this was easily explained as Chris M., Becky and Hannah were leading that day and Chris wouldn't allow for any slacking. We set off on what seemed a much shorter day than the road the day before, along the coast, but that was not fully appreciating the terrain. This consisted of birch trees planted so closely that it was a struggle to squeeze between two let alone a 12km stretch of forest with a rucksack on. No one noticed the pain Mary was in until after lunch when we reached the top of a near vertical slope and she collapsed in tears. As this was so unlike Mary we all panicked slightly, but when she cheered up a few minutes later I set off laughing and joking near the front with Sam, Jim and Damian. We all failed to notice that Mary was lagging as she was in so much pain that she could only walk very slowly. We had covered so little ground that everyone was worried that we were never going to make it to our campsite. To push ourselves we split into two groups as we walked. We suddenly found ourselves at a huge river and sat there to wait for the others, confused, as it wasn't marked on our map, when Alex and Tom arrived from the physiology camp site a two minute walk away. They were heading the same way as us but had had a rest day that day. We found out that we were much further on than we imagined and it was only another 30-minute walk to our camp site! As it was then 8 p.m. this was amazing news and so we eagerly awaited the arrival of the others. We didn't arrive at our camp site until 9.30 p.m. (Norwegian timing) and all went to bed immediately, not really appreciating the beautiful fjord that we were camped on the edge of.

Going to Norway was an amazing experience, and it wasn't like anything I could have imagined back in November when I made the first strange decision to go to a cold climate with so many strangers. The worst part of the whole expedition was coming home again and leaving that magical place. I hope that I get another chance to do something like that again as those 42 days were so different to anything else in my life and I made so many new friends that I hope I'll keep in touch with forever.

Meg Barne was invited to give a ten minute talk to the Royal Geographic Society Conference in London, at which about 1,000 were present.

Amazon Diary - Alice Hughes (6A)

July 21st - "Having had my last bath for the next five weeks, I travelled to the airport. I sat perched apprehensively on my rucksack, worrying if it was all going to be ok, I had almost missed the flight by a muddle up in the dates.

The first leg of the journey was from Gatwick to Dallas, and took about ten hours. There was a bridge stop over at Dallas, where many of us were searched due to a faulty machine, and most of our stoves were confiscated.

The next flight was from Dallas to Lima (the capital of Peru), this took about another eight hours, before spending the night sleeping on the cold stone of the airport floor in Lima. Needless to say no one got much sleep.

The final leg of the journey flew from Lima to Iquitos, effectively doubling back on itself, and passing over

the Andes and rainforest in the process. We finally arrived in Iquitos, tired after about 2 days with no sleep, but excited; as we were loaded into buses, vultures circled above.

We sorted out the base camp (the cow shed), and attempted to put up our hammocks, but all the poles had been eaten away at the ground by termites; the whole place was very unstable! My hammock then fell down in the middle of the night. We also came across large tarantulas, they would not be the last we would see.

July 26th - Today we left off early to catch the boat to take us to lake Yuto. We saw caracaras, vultures, a zigzag heron, and amazing multicoloured finches. The boat took all day to get to what would be our camp for the rest of the trip. It was odd, moving through the rainforest on the board, the river stained brown by tamarisk from the tree roots. Trying to get to the toilet at the end of the boat was the hardest task, as to get past the luggage you had to climb outside the boat, without falling into the river. When we arrived at what would be our camp it was already getting dark and we had to hack down a place to put our hammocks, dig the loo and cook our evening meal.

July 27th - We tried to work the radio, made nets, went out in the Peke canoes and went for a brief jungle walk, during which we saw tarantulas, more giant morpho butterflies (20cm), and several giant millipedes: there were also lizards everywhere. We went on a night transect and found a 10cm long cockroach, spiders, tree frogs, brightly coloured insects, a huge cane toad and a fat yellow bird, which kept blinking and didn't move even when we were only a few centimetres away.

July 28th - While eating breakfast some pink river dolphins appeared, it was wonderful seeing such amazing creatures and they were bright pink. Some of us then went on a jungle hike; we caught a huge red and brown millipede, then, as we were walking through the forest, monkeys ran across the path. We watched them climbing and jumping from trees before disappearing into the forest. Then, when we were looking at a bromeliad, a huge spectacled owl suddenly appeared; it was only a few metres away. You can't get that close in zoos! We walked into the small village of Yuto and painted our faces with the bright orange face paint plant, which is also used for medicinal purposes. It was odd seeing these people; their lives so different from our own, yet they are still happy. They were very wary of us, the children had certainly not seen white people before. It was disturbing to see a girl my age feeding a baby, and finding it completely normal. There are no teenagers in these places, you are an adult or a child..

July 29th - Today we were meant to be cutting transects to be surveyed later. It poured with rain, and our first two transects ended in rivers, the third was completely impassable, even with the help of machetes. The fourth attempt ended in a plantation, so transect cutting was abandoned. We walked to the small village of El Porvenir to eat our normal lunch of crackers, all the village children gathered round us, at a distance. I let them look through my binoculars after which they exclaimed and rubbed their eyes. A football pitch seems to make up the centre of each village in Peru, even in the middle of the rainforest, so we played football with them, in our socks (so not to hurt them). The whole village watched and cheered in Spanish, and the 18 Peruvian children ended up beating the 5 of us 9-2. We didn't share a language and at the beginning they were scared of us, but by the end they were cart wheeling, having piggy-back races on us, and giving us flowers (such as bright yellow orchids). The children followed us back into the forest, holding our hands until they were allowed to go no further. Even the most hard-hearted of us were touched.

Honours Board (2001 onwards)

Please keep Chris Wood (1965-71, staff 1976-) informed of any academic prizes, PhD's, and first class honours obtained.

Congratulations

To **James Quick** (1975-80) on being appointed headmaster of the junior school at Gresham's, Holt. This provides an interesting link between Rendcomb and Gresham's. (We also learn that **Neil Johnson** (1964-70) sends his sons to Gresham's!) **J. H. Simpson**, the first headmaster (1920-32) taught at Gresham's - **D. W. Lee-Browne**, Rendcomb's second headmaster (1932-60) was educated at Gresham's. **C. H. Osborne**, Rendcomb's first history master, came from the staff of Gresham's and **L. C. Schiller** who taught mathematics in the early days of the college was also educated at Gresham's.

Marriages

Robert Sage (1987-94) to Rebecca Swann. August 2002

Births

To Gail and **Chris Norman** (1987-94) a daughter, Charlotte Victoria, May 2002
To **Jennifer** (née Lane 1980-8 1) and Arne **Lane-Birkenstock** a son, Ben Philipp, Jan 2003
To Lara and **Christopher Pulford** (1970-77) a son, Nicholas Gabriel, October 2002
To Rachel and **Chris Moody** (1980-87) a daughter, Hannah Grace, June 2002
To **Rachel** (née Houghton, staff 1994-) and Simon **Fielding** a daughter, Miriam, August 2002
To **Nichola** and Elliot **Gill** (staff 1994-) a daughter, Madeleine Lucie, May 2002

O.R. Web Site

Many O.R.'s have found this site and have enjoyed making contact through it. Our renewed thanks are due to Colin Hitchcock (1971-78) not only for setting up the site but keeping it up to date so meticulously.

Old Rendcombian News

Gerard Benson (1944-50) had his latest collection of poems: *To Catch an Elephant*, published by Smith/Doorstep Books in September 2002, illustrations were done by Cathy Benson.

Robert Sage (1987-94) is working to save the people of Barry, South Wales, from heart disease at present. His marriage is reported elsewhere.

James Fonseca (1962-68) wrote as follows last May: "I have done a second walk in France, from Arles to Pau, a section of the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostella, much less travelled compared to my walk the previous year from Bayonne to Santiago. However, it did give me the opportunity to get a better feel for the south of France prior to making a house purchase. I spent some ten days in Gers after the walk and have bought a house in a medieval hamlet (population 19) about 45 minutes from Toulouse. The building was a Templar monastic foundation and the original walls are still in place. The front of the house, which is liveable, dates from the late 18th century and is a typical Gascon 'maison de maitre'. The rear portion, which is attached, dates from the 15th century and is in some disrepair, a fact to which I can attest, as I fell through the floor on the second storey on my most recent visit. I was able to get my elbows out in time to catch myself, which saved me from an eighteen foot drop to the earth below, unexpectedly quick reactions for someone of advancing years! The house comes with about an acre of garden and my own potager. The latter is a relic of Napoleonic times I believe, under a decree stating that all small towns and villages should set aside land so that residents would have a plot to grow vegetables. The garden has the remains of some of the old monastic buildings and the stonework for what I am told was the medieval camp pond. I intend to restore it. I have applied to do an M.A. in journalism at a couple of British universities."

Francis Barton (1988-95) graduated from Sheffield University after reading biology and philosophy. He is now on a three year appointment at St. Luke's Church in Cheltenham as part of a project to reach out to children and young people in the community, starting with those entering primary education. The church has strong links with St. John's Church of England Primary School. Francis spends much time assisting in the school, running lunchtime clubs and helping in other ways, in addition to organising many church activities for young people in the parish. Francis and his wife, Jenny, have recently moved to a cottage in Stroud.

Justine Platt (1988-90) has taken a new job with Plow and Hearth catalogue as a product manager. This means she gets to select the range of home products.

Christopher Terrill (staff 1978-83) was responsible for the series on BBC1 last September called "The Ship", about the voyage of the Endeavour.

David Toresen (1964-71) has renewed his contact with Rendcomb through "Friends Reunited" - as have quite a number of O.R.'s. He works as senior resuscitation officer at St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington. He trains all the cardiac arrest and trauma teams in the hospital. He says it is a good job, great fun (!! -Ed) but he does see a lot of dead people as his job has a big clinical role. As he admits, it is a strange career for someone who failed all his science 'O' levels! He also mentions **Martin Bircher** (1970-72), a consultant surgeon at St. George's Hospital who was in the news in 2002.

David Hammond (1975-80) was filmed taking part in the Paris-Dakar Rally last January and appeared in Michael Palin's 'Sahara' series on BBC1 in October. The filming took place just days before David dropped from the top of a sand dune and had to be flown to hospital in Paris. He has made a good recovery and has returned to grass track events. The cameramen for the series were **Nigel Meakin** (1956-63) and Peter Meakin (his son? - Ed)

Richard Dunwoody (1975-81) has figured in the local Gloucestershire news recently. He is part of a team taking part in the first race to the magnetic North Pole. There are nine people in the team who will be divided into teams of three to compete against others from across the world. The teams will be setting off from the North West Territories of Canada in April and the 400 mile race is expected to take about 30 days. The team was shown acclimatising to low temperatures in a frozen products warehouse in Swindon and doing fitness training on Kemble airfield by pulling a Hawker Hunter jet along the runway.

Jonathan Quick (1979-86) is very much enjoying running his travel business in Cheltenham which is proving successful.

Eric Blencowe (1976-83) has returned from Kenya and now works in London for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and is responsible for general policy matters associated with the government's sponsorship of the Environment Agency.

Stephen Lea (staff 1989-97) is now on the staff of a school in Worcester. He returned to Rendcomb to play the harpsichord in a concert on Remembrance Sunday and played the organ at a concert given by the choir at Cirencester Methodist Church on Advent Sunday. He is to be married in May.

Chris Morshead (1974-77) writes: "Following the tragic events of 9/11/01 I found my new career in the world of commercial aviation in smoking ruins. I have come to be most thankful that I was far better off than the hundreds of thousands of people affected by those sad events, either those who lost loved ones or friends on that dreadful day, or those who have suffered from the far reaching effects that 9/11 had, and still has, on the global airline industry. Having had an enjoyable time working for Her Majesty in the past, it was not long before I was back in gainful employment in navy uniform. I am currently based back at RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset in my old role as an engineer officer. In some ways it seems like the last three years 'outside' never happened. In addition to my return to the navy, I am looking forward to getting married again this summer. Yes, the last two years have been quite 'eventful' all in all. This time round I seem to have acquired an instant family in terms of two lads aged 17 and 15 and a daughter aged 13 going on 21 - as well as 'er indoors', Sharon. All this has had a major impact on my ordered lifestyle but I would not have it any other way - well, most of the time! My hope is that I will have a few years of stability now - but, as I have found out, life seldom works out as planned!"

James Button (1990-95) spent a gap year on an Israeli Kibbutz, including 4 months with the Israel Defence Force as part of their bomb squad. He was wounded twice and is a qualified parachutist. He graduated in 1999 at Nene University College, Northampton, where he read English and history. Since then he has had various jobs including those with police civilian support staff and Barclaycard.

Friends Reunited

From **Charlie Jeffery** (1988-90):-

"After having a baby I decided that I'd like to do something just for me as my life seemed to be pulled in lots of different directions. The O.R. magazine dropped on my doormat and I now find myself on the committee - how did that happen?

I was tasked with trying to make contact again with O.R.'s who had subscribed when they left school but had forgotten to include the society in their new home card list! The only way we could think of doing this was to use the very successful Friends Reunited website. There are currently 693 people listed under Rendcomb between 1945-2001 so armed with a spreadsheet I started at the beginning and worked my way through. I have had over 50 replies from people missing from our database and all of them were pleased to be able to receive newsletters again.

Looking at the comments people have made, most had mentioned whom they were still in contact with. It really hit home to me how important our school years are and that most of us carry friends through our lives that we made in those special days. Also, how wonderful Friends Reunited is as it does exactly as it says on the tin - of course, only if you want it to.

1939 Founder's Day

OR's may be interested in the programme for founder's day - Saturday, June 17th, 1939

PROGRAMME

- 3 p.m. Assembly in the gymnasium
The Rev. Canon H Sewell, M.A., LL.D., chairman of the governing body will be in the chair.
The headmaster will present his annual report.
The headmaster of Harrow School will give an address.
- 4 p.m. Tea will be served inside the college.
- 4.30-5 p.m. Manual, science and art exhibitions open.
- 5-5.15 p.m. Canoe regatta on the lake.
- N.B. - There will be a warning bell fifteen minutes before the regatta begins.
Visitors are requested not to go to the lake before they hear this sound.
- 6-7.30 p.m. Exhibitions again open.

Bus for Cheltenham leaves Rendcomb Corner 7.53 p.m.

Bus for Cirencester leaves Rendcomb Corner 7.44 p.m.

HONOURS 1938-1939

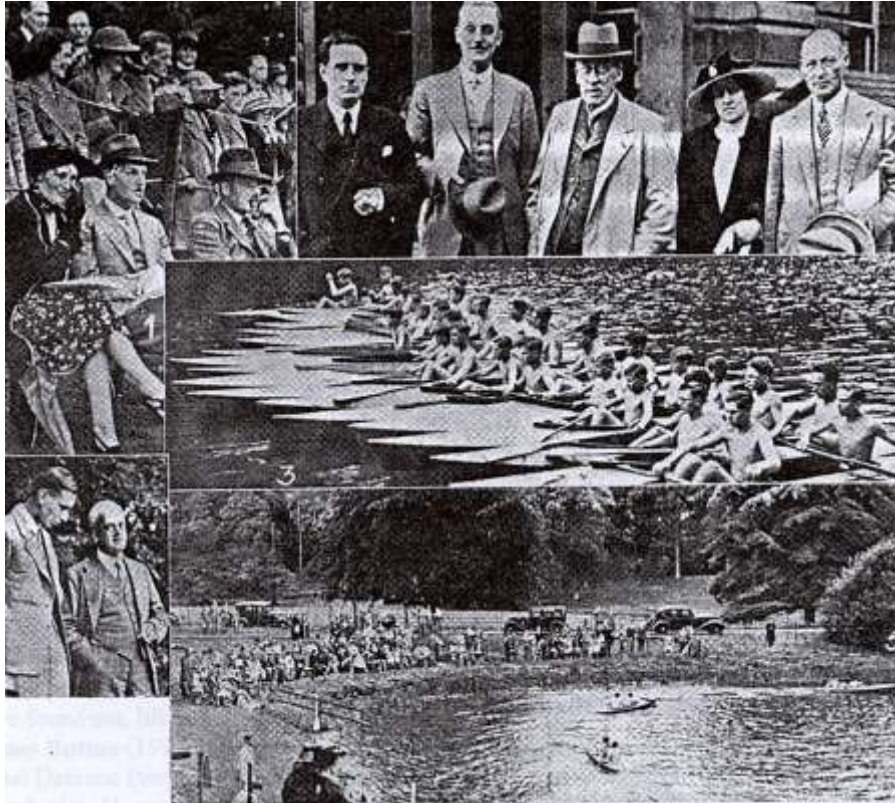
J. C. Maslin, OR. - Board of Education Studentship.
T.W. Kitchen, OR. - Goldsmith's Company Scholarship
D. D. Haig - Passed into R.A.F. College, Cranwell
B. H. Peacock - Coombe Memorial Scholarship, Bristol
Higher School Certificate - E. R. S. Gillham, P. H. Tuft, B. H. Peacock, W. A. Wyon
London Matriculation - M. H. F. Fischer, D. F. Gallop, E. R. Morris, A. S. C. Smith,
J. F. Spencer, D. W. Stone, H. W. T. Bates, P. D. B. Levett
School Certificate - P. Alder, A. E. Godsell, P. R. Highley, E. B. Smith, F. J. Willis

THE CANOE REGATTA

1. The Canoes will appear from behind the island.
2. Figure of Eight.
3. Massed turn followed by V formation.
4. Simple Aquabatics in formation - crew change places (two methods);
Paddling from the bow; standing in the canoe.
 1. Individual Aquabatics.
 2. Chariot paddling.
 3. Crews change from one canoe to another.
 4. Race for 15' canoes. Two single paddles.
 5. Race for 17' canoes. Two single paddles and passenger.
 6. Race for canoes under 15' long. One single paddle.
 7. Race for canoes under 15' long. One double paddle.
 8. Finale.

The science exhibition is on view at the laboratories.

The manual and art exhibitions are on view in the main hall of the college.



All the canoes have been made by boys in the college workshop

O.R.'s Matchday

I stand aside from woodland paths
 And watch you, eager lithesome youths,
 Run onwards, leaping, bounding,
 Cleaving the frosted air with strident laughs,
 Teasing your friends; in childhood jesting
 Of matches played, and won or lost,
 Till homewards, softly fading
 In chill receding light
 You vanish from my sight
 Your destined paths to tread.

Oh valiant, confident boys
 I too, once ran
 Where you have run,
 I too, began
 A trail of laughter, sorrow, fun,
 Known days of exultation rare
 Trod paths of labour, joy, despair.
 Plumbed depths of anguish, pain and tears
 Yet treasured, in declining years.
 The mighty hand of God.

Rejoice in life as best you may
 Savour each moment, work or play.
 You may be sure, before 'tis done,
 That after day, the night will come.

Douglas Payne (1940-48)



Old Rendcombian Rugby 2002

“Reprobates”

Forwards

Will Brittain-Jones (97) P
 Jim Graham (97) H
 Harry Aldrich-Blake (99) P
 Freddie Lait (01) L
 Phil Webb (99) L
 Tommy Lait (03!) 8

Backs

Steve Jones (95) SH
 Pat Boydell (95) FH
 John Morgan (95) C
 Ali Harris (96) C
 Fred Ingham (95) W
 Rob Hart (95) W
 Ian Thompson (95) FB

“Retrobates”

Forwards

Rob Matson (88). P
 Angus Trowern (86) H
 Phil Gordon-Jones (01?) P
 Aubrey Powell (89) L
 Laurie Barton (00) L
 Charlie Hutton-Potts (83) 8

Backs

Bob Witchell (97) SH
 Grant Hughes (89) FH
 James Spackman (02) C
 Ben Maslen (90) C
 Manny Grcia (97) W
 Alex Andreis (88) W
 Barrie Davies (92) FB

Talk about Arctic conditions! - But there was no room for polar bears, only the raw power of the ‘Retrobates’ forwards for the first 15 minutes. Finally a chink in the ‘Reprobates’ defence allowed (I think!) Barrie Davies to go over. The conversion wasted, the ‘Reprobates’ (many of whom had met up the evening beforehand for dinner) decided to come back for ‘seconds’, making the ‘Retrobates’ suffer from quick hands in the backs - Freddie Ingham doing what he does best from 2 metres. Pat Boydell stroked the conversion over to take the youngsters into the interval 7-5 up. It would have been more had not the backs mistaken the 5m line for the try line (flags would have been helpful for orientation - noted for next season) in the dying seconds before the whistle.

After an immense effort by the ‘Retrobates’ in the first half - in which they literally devoured the hapless Steve “almost two ears” Jones in a maul - the big questions posed by the brave spectators were “does Aubrey and his ‘band of brothers’ have the stamina to last?” closely followed by “how will Steve ‘they drew first blood’ Jones exact his revenge?” They didn’t have long to wait as the hunted became the hunter and Steve mesmerised the ‘Retrobates’ defence with his fast (white-booted) footwork to jink his way through. Freddie Lait and his ‘young, not-so-pretender’ brother Tommy (who had only the previous day taken the College’s 1st XV to an unbeaten season) decided to pick apart the ‘Retrobates’ through the centre - strong rucking, deft handling, ending up on the end of some fine backs handiwork they both got onto the score sheet.

At 28-5 the grey sky must have seemed like the bowels of Hades to the victims of such an onslaught but the stratus framed a near perfect exhibition ‘powerplay’ from the ‘Retrobates’ as the frozen onlookers were warmed by the trailblazers of Ben Maslen, Grant Hughes, Rob Matson and James Spackman who ended up the try scorer.

The last 5 minutes were all the ‘Reprobates’ - firstly, Tommy Lait conjured up a try from the restart, certainly putting the ‘football’ into ‘rugby football’ closely followed by Pat Boydell opening his legs and showing his class under the posts. The final score of 38-10 spoke volumes about the commitment of both sides as well as

the cliché “survival of the fittest” - many of the ‘Retrobates’ vowing to start their new year resolutions early on the fitness front as they sipped their beers afterwards. Many thanks to Aubrey Powell and Steve Jones for their ‘three line whip’ of their contemporaries - indeed, to all the players who took part to make this even such a success.

ASB

Reprobates (38): Tries: - F. Ingham, S. Jones, F. Lait, T. Lait (x2) P. Boydell Con: - P. Boydell (x4)
Retrobates (10): Tries: - B. Davies ?, J. Spackman



Old Rendcombian Hockey Teams 2003

1st XI: S. Jones (GK), F. Lait, A. Pitt, P. Boydell, D. Ashby, J. Morgan, I. Thompson, A. Taylor, H. Davies, N. Ridley, S. Maylott, R. Demczak
Lost 0-2

2nd XI: M. Wils (GK), W. Brittain-Jones, J. Fellows, A. Powell, B. Maslen, F. Barton, C. Hutton-Potts, M. Moody, R. Witchell, J. Graham
Lost 2-3

3rd XI: C. Marcham, G. Somers, C. Yardley, A. Topalian, R. Blackwell, C. Horton, C. Pope, S. Jones, A. Phelps, A. Payne, T. Abbott (GK)
Won 4-1

Sir Francis Goldsmid

In the 2002 newsletter we published Frank Dutton’s (1936-44) masterly account of the history of the manor of Rendcomb, in which Sir Francis Goldsmid figured largely as the first owner of the present mansion. It was therefore surprising, and rather fitting, that one of his descendants, a great-nephew, I think, should call in at the college last year. The visit, however, caused me some embarrassment. I had just written, at the headmaster’s request, a brief survey of the college’s history over the past eighty years which the college receptionist had just typed. She showed this to Mr. Goldsmid who quickly pointed out that I had inadvertently misspelt Sir Francis Goldsmid’s name on the first page. Mea maxima culpa!

WJDW

Rendcombe - A Poem

The Rev. G. A. E. Kempson, Rector of Rendcomb, published this poem in 1889.

Rendcombe - "lovelier than all the valleys of the Cotswold Hills" - *Tennyson*

A narrow valley in the Cotswold hills,
Down which a river winds its crooked way:
Here sluggish, where the water is dammed up
To turn the Mill down yonder by the bridge;
(Thus Thames doth show his strength in infancy,
Though hereabouts the natives call him Churn).
Here merrily babbling o'er its pebbly bed;
On either bank rich meadows, where knee-deep
The cattle pasture, reaching to the slopes
Which mount on either side with steep ascent.
Close underneath the hill upon the right
A highway, fringed with larch and towering pine,
In which lithe squirrels gambol all the day,
Leaping with graceful bounds from tree to tree.
Behind, the road ascends to Thames his fount -
Before, it leads you to the ancient town

Of Roman Cirencester, and the Vale
O'er which presides the ghostly pale White Horse,
All round are stately trees, Wych-elm and oak,
Chestnut and beech, whose gray and gnarled trunks
Could tell, if they could speak, a wondrous tale
Of by-gone years:- What time the Norman Knights
Armed, cap-a-pied, in glittering coats of mail
Chased the wild boar and deer amid the glades
Of Eycot's thickets, or withstood the shock
Of English yeoman and their cloth-yard shafts;
Or, later on, of bloody wars maintained
By rival nobles, greedy for the sake
Of this or that pretender to the Crown;
Or, still a little later, of gay troops
Of Cavaliers, bedecked in lace and gold,
Swearing and boastful, drinking, roisterous,
Yet faithful ever to a faithless king;
And Cromwell's soldiers, clad in sober trim,
Waking the echoes of the opposing hills
With canting texts and nasal psalmody,
Yet fighting with relentless iron heart.
But all are now forgotten:- armoured knights,
Lancastrians, Yorkists, crop-eared Puritans,

And dandy Cavaliers, have all marched past
And vanished, while the sturdy oak remains,
A witness to the littleness of man.
Peace reigns supreme: no martial trumpet now
Affrights the traveller with its wild alarms,
Or scares the lusty labourer from his work
To seek a hiding place secure from harm.
The only music now which meets the ear
Is horn of huntsman and the bay of hounds,
Welcome to all, who flock to join the sport.
The woodman throws his axe beside the tree,
The team is left mid-furrow on the land,
The hedger chucks his bill-hook in the ditch

And madly joins the hunt, till out of breath.
 It is a stirring sight to see the meet
 At Rendcombe Park. The Master leads the way
 To draw the neighbouring coverts - Tally ho!
 The fox is stealing off to Conigree!
 The hounds bay out their music, while the crowd
 Of gentlemen in pink and ladies fair,
 All push their horses up the carriage drive
 Beneath the windows of the noble hall,
 A splendid mansion in the Italian style,
 Designed by Hardwick, for the wealthy Jew

Sir Francis Goldsmid, who had bought the place
 From good Sir John, whose family had dwelt
 Contented, for two hundred years and more,
 Beneath the roof tree of an English home.
 Superb it stands upon an eminence

Geo. A E Kempson
 Rendcombe Rectory

The second half of the poem will be in next year's newsletter.

Notes

Line 4. - There was a mill here from very early time. It is mentioned in the "Domesday Book".

Line 5. - The Churn is one of the principal affluents of the Thames.

Line 12. - The Cheltenham and Cirencester road.

Line 15. - The "Severn Springs", generally reckoned as the source of the Thames.

Line 17. - Cirencester, i.e., the camp on the Churn, called by the Romans "Corinium".

Line 18. - The Vale of the White Horse

Line 23. - From the "Domesday Book" we learn that the Manor of Rendcombe, which belonged to Aluric the Saxon in the days of Edward the Confessor, was granted by William the Conqueror to Turolde. His son Gislebert, on taking part against William Rufus, was dispossessed, and the estate given to Robert Fitz Hamon, a son of Henry the First, afterwards created Earl of Gloucester. His granddaughter Amice inherited Rendcombe, and was married to Richard de Clare.

Line 25. - Eycot, the name of a forest manor adjoining Rendcombe, now part of the estate. It was formerly the property of the Dean and Chapter of Worcester.

Line 27. - Rendcombe remained in the Clare family for more than three centuries, sometimes passing through the female line, till forfeited by the last representative of that line, the Duke of Buckingham, who was attainted by Act of Parliament in the reign of Henry VI. It was afterwards granted by Edward IV to Warwick, the King-maker.

Line 55. - The master of the Cotswold Hunt, W Hicks-Beach, Esq.

Line 57. - Conigree is the name of the high ridge which bounds Rendcombe Park towards the East.

Line 65. - The estate did not remain long in the possession of the Warwick family. It was granted by John Tame, a wealthy merchant, who had also bought the manor Fairford. He died in the year 1500, and was succeeded by his son, Sir Edmund Tame. Margaret, his granddaughter, one of three co-heiresses, received Rendcombe for her portion, and being married to Sir Humphrey Stafford carried the estate into that family. About the year 1600 it was sold to Sir Richard Berkeley. His son, Sir Maurice Berkeley, having strongly espoused the cause of King Charles I, suffered greatly in the civil war, and had to pay a very heavy fine to the Commonwealth. The manor next passed by purchase to Sir Christopher Guise, in whose family it remained for some two centuries, Sir John Guise selling it to Sir Francis Goldsmid in the year 1853. It is now in the possession of James Taylor, Esq., who, at a great cost, has done much to bring back the farms into thorough cultivation.

G.A.E.K.

(The poem, which is reproduced with the permission of the Gloucester Echo, came into Bill White's possession some years ago.)

An Incident in Rendcomb Village

In the last newsletter there was an account of the installation of Charles Jefferson as chaplain and priest-in-charge of the village. Such events were not always so peaceful in the nineteenth century.

Thomas Allen (rector at North Cerney 1827-1875!) inducts the new rector of Rendcomb. In 1831 the death took place of Thomas Tyndale Jayne who had been rector of Rendcomb since 1786. Thomas Allen conducted his funeral at Rendcomb on 11th August. By now Joseph Pitt, solicitor, banker and member of parliament for Cricklade had acquired among various other livings the advowson of Rendcomb. On Jayne's death he appointed his son Cornelius Pitt to the benefice. The rector of North Cerney, Thomas Allen, was asked to induct him. But there was strong opposition from the Jayne family who locked the church door on the appointed day to prevent the ceremony taking place. Mary Stephens, writing from Woodmancote on 4th September 1831 tells us, "The Jayne party say and do what they like. They are now having a bustle with Mr. Pitt and last Sunday he, in company with the churchwardens, Mr. Allen, rector of North Cerney, John Kimber etc. had the church door forced open by Crump and was formerly inducted. The Jaynes would not give up the key but set off at an early hour to the bishop of Gloucester. On Monday Mr. Pitt also went to him when he ordered him to return home and insist on the Jaynes leaving immediately".

Summer Reunion 2002 - Sunday 30th June

With a view to encouraging O.R.'s with young families to attend the summer reunion, the format for the day had been altered and the formal buffet had been replaced but a sandwich bar with baguettes and ice cream.

Unfortunately because that Sunday clashed with the final of the world cup not enough people could be found to make up a cricket team. This meant that many who could have come to the event did not.

While this was very disappointing for those who did attend it is hoped that they were in some way compensated by the headmaster making available much of the main building for people to view.

The tower was opened up and it afforded many people a marvellous view of the surrounding valley. Sister Hunt kindly allowed visits to what were once dorms 10 and 11, where now the second hand uniform and costumes for the plays are kept, and we ventured into the medical centre (previously sick bay and the maid's room) and onto the balcony over the portico. The room leading onto it is now a committee/meeting room. A little more determination was needed to find the bathroom, which still had three baths in it, but this was discovered at the top of the red stairs opposite the medical centre door. The baths now heavily disguised as receptacles in which to keep props.

The main college building, for all its changes, continues to enthral and it is hoped that all those who did come felt that their day wasn't wasted.

JRG

Among those who attended were:

Stuart Newell (1978-85)	John Gilchrist (1944-57)	Sophie Robinson (1990-92)
Philip Griffiths (1940-43)	Mike Miles (1943-50)	Thom Gilbert (1992-99)
Neil Lumby (1968-73)	Nigel Hall (1972-79)	Phil Webb (1992-99)
Frank Dutton (1936-44)	Spencer Hannan (1979-83)	Tara Sleggs
Richard Tudor (1973-80)	Juliet Birley (1985-87)	Annie (née Heal) Wood (1985-87)
Julian Comrie (1946-54)	Dave Ashby (1993-99)	Charlie (née Stephens) Jeffery (1988-90)
Nigel Green (1961-69)	Sophy Layzett (1990-92)	Jane (née Watson) Gunner (1975-77)
Peter Cockell (1943-51)		



Jack Fell and Roy Dennis in dinner jackets at the 1960 Christmas party

Joan Essenhigh

Joan retired as laboratory technician in December after more than thirty years of efficient service. She continues to do evening duties in Park House and has been seen in the village looking after Rachel Fielding's baby. It is the intention of the society to honour Joan's efforts for the school when she finishes all duties. David continues to play an important role coaching sports but they have moved out of Rendcomb to a very pleasant cottage in Compton Abdale.

Joan and David came to Rendcomb in 1968. When their children had grown up in 1973 Joan took on the job of physics technician, under Jack Fell, and brought her organisational skills to bear on the equipment, much of which was home made. As a new teacher in the seventies, I certainly appreciated Joan's support for the equipment intensive junior science courses. It was a time when teaching was less key stages and the second form were entered for national competitions and did very well on several occasions. From physics she moved to biology in 1983, having done some biology since 1979. Given Joan's experience in hospital labs in London, this was a sensible move for her and the school. So it was in biology that she remained under a variety of heads of department, namely Andrew Potts, Charlie Hannaford, Bridget Goldsmith (whom she knew from Marlborough) and James Stutchbury. Her efficiency was always a hallmark of her work and the pupils found her helpful and friendly. Joan also enjoyed visiting the records office for the geography department. It would be remiss of me not to mention her contribution to activities and sport in previous years. She passed on her love of archery to many Rendcombians and for many years she provided a sport for those who were not necessarily so good at team games.

We hope to see Joan at Rendcomb for some time to come but meanwhile we are most grateful to her for her massive contribution to the science department.

Chris Wood

David Hawkswell writes:

"When I arrived at Rendcomb in 1973, Joan had been working with Jack Fell for a couple of years so she had some idea of the task involved in arranging the rooms in the Stable Block to deal with the increasing numbers of students. In my first year we had 24 physics students in 6B, all in one set! Together we had to clear rooms, cupboards and boxes. Jack never threw anything out so Joan became expert in packing rubbish securely so Jack would not see what we were getting rid of! No job was too hard for Joan; she dealt with the problems of rooms at opposite sides of the Stable Block and shifting apparatus backwards and forwards with her usual cheerful good spirit.

Many O.R.s will remember Joan from buying electronic components, batteries and tapes at the electronic store. She quickly mastered the jargon: BC108, p-n-p transistors, colour codes etc and made my job easier by organising the store and the ordering. Eventually Joan moved over to the biology department when the computing side grew so that a full time technician was needed. Joan was a great person to work with and her qualities were respected by staff and pupils alike, but most of all, by me!"

Friends like These

Last summer, as a result of a bet, **Sam Maylott** (91-98), **Harvey Davies** (93-98), **Chris Scarth** (91-98), **Tristan Sharman** (91-96) and **Tony Abbott** (91-98) took part in the game show *Friends Like These* hosted by Ian Wright. The competition pits 5 girls against 5 boys and tests how well they know each other.

The introduction had the boys filmed at the college sliding down the banisters in Clock Hall and having a food fight in the dining room. They were subsequently described as the boys from Cheltenham while the team of girls were from Sutton Coldfield.

The first round of the game takes successive members of each team and puts them through a challenge against their opposite number. Sam, Chris, Tristan and Toby ran the gauntlet of a jigsaw wall, buzz wire, spot the alien object and complete a zigzag path for a robot. The boys triumphed winning 3 out of the 4 challenges. It was then left to Harvey to roll up the five balls along a ramp and into the centre of a revolving disc. Unbelievably he achieved this feat making it impossible for the girls to match their score. This meant that the boys were then able to play for a group holiday in the Bahamas.

Most competitors found the second round the most testing and failed to answer personal questions accurately. The fact that the Rendcomb team answered all their questions correctly not only showed that friendships formed at Rendcomb are as strong as ever but also sent the lads off to their holiday in the Bahamas.

College News

Despite national teaching shortages in certain subjects, the school was fortunate to be able to make the following quality appointments in September:-

Malcolm Ford took over as head of physics and head of ICT after the departure of **Deborah Botham** to Sheffield High School for Girls and **Ian Patterson** to Louth School. Both teachers contributed widely to extra-curricular activities and have been missed. Deborah also ran the public examinations and these have been taken over by **Chris Wood**. The school has begun to invest more in ICT and it is hoped that the whole site will be linked together by the end of the year.

Michael Debenham moved to Wisbech Grammar as head of physics and **Neil Havard**, who has helped out on many occasions in the past, became a permanent member of staff. **Nicky Houghton**, who also taught at Rendcomb before, returned to teach ICT. **Sandy Westhead** stepped down as head of girls' games and has thrown all her energy into the special needs department, following the departure of **Sarah Cuthbert**. **Barbara Shiells** is teaching PE and girls' games; in March there was an experimental afternoon of lacrosse, which may be introduced in the near future. **Naomi Gibbons (OR.)** took over from **David Whitehead** as assistant in the music department and already she has made her mark in the school. David is now head of music at Alice Ottley School, Worcester. **Cath Forshaw** joined the mathematics department while **Beth Mang** and **Sarah White** stood in for **Rachel Fielding** (née Houghton) during her maternity leave. **Diana Dodd** became assistant head and handed over Lawn House (3rd to 5th year girls) to **Vicky Hayward** (née Hatton). Vicky's husband, Darrell, has taken responsibility for all ICT, AV and lighting technical matters.

Paul Sykes wrote his last timetable recently and hands over the demanding post of director of studies to **Paul Dodd**.

The junior school has expanded still further to 150 and continues to be successful. The headmaster, **Adrian Palmer**, is moving on in September to Wycliffe junior and he will be replaced by **Martin Watson** from The Downs School, Bristol.

The school was inspected in November by the Independent Schools Inspectorate and, although the final report has not yet been published, the outcome is very pleasing. In particular the inspectors appreciated what makes Rendcomb so special, in contrast with the 1996 inspection.

Rendcomb sport continues to enjoy many successes and no team has bettered the record of the 1st XV which won all of its matches and received a congratulatory letter from Jonny Wilkinson.

Many areas of the school are being refurbished. Recently the Arts Block clock faces were taken down for painting and the library is being given a long awaited make over.

The senior school consists of 148 boys and 104 girls, of whom 127 are boarders.

The following members of the society have children in the senior and junior schools:-

Alex Brealy	Charles Hutton-Potts	Jane Gunner (née Watson)
Adam & Jenny Phelps (née Watson)	Mark Wilcox	John Gotley
Dennis Uzzell (deceased)	Colin Burden	

The following members of staff have children in the senior and junior schools:-

Cath Forshaw
Charles Jefferson
James & Jane Stutchbury
Gerry Holden
Paul Sykes
Adrian & Julie Palmer
Martin Graham
Paul Jennings
Lindsay North
Mike & Ann Slark



Form 2 in 1990 taking part in the Cotswold Clear-up

Destination of 2002 6A Leavers

<i>6A Leavers</i>	<i>University Destination</i>	<i>2002/2003</i>
Frances Burden	University of Warwick	Biological studies
Kom-Anong	King's College, University of London	Human biology
Chaiwatanasirikul	Sutton Coldfield College	Art foundation
Winnie Cheung	Oxford Brookes University	Music
Richard Demczak	University of Newcastle	English literature
Olivia Evans	University of Newcastle	Geographic information science
Penelope Foster	Re-applying	English & history of art
Nellie Gilson	Royal Agricultural College	Business management
Philip Gordon-Jones	Oxford Brookes University	City planning
Dave Law	Sutton Coldfield College	Graphic design
Hau Ling Leung	Ruskin College, Oxford	Fine art
Edward McHenry	University of Birmingham	Law
Victoria Mackinnon	Re-applying	Psychiatry
Thomas Matsukawa		Art foundation
Nat Maylott	Oxford Brookes University	Business management
Stanislaw Odintsov	Leeds, Trinity & All Saints	Marketing & management
Sarah Padmore	Birmingham College of Food and Tourism	Tourism management
Jonathan Pratt	Re-applying	
Christopher Quinn		
John Raby		
Aimee Smith		
James Spackman	Re-applying	Business studies
Christopher Thomas		
Nicolas Trost	University of Birmingham	Mechanical engineering
Laurie Wallis		
Stephen Ward	Re-applying	Marketing
Friedrich Ysenburg	University of Brighton	International business

O R Shop

Polo shirt	£14*
Sweat shirt	£17*
Rugby shirt	£34*
Tie	£5
Blazer badge	£5
Print of the school	£40* (packed in very strong tube)
Framed print	£65 (not by post)

*plus £1.50 p&p

Any of the above may be purchased at the school or by post (not the framed print) from:-
C. J. Wood, 9 Hammond Drive, Northleach, GL54 3JF
Email: c.j.wood@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk

Cheques should be made payable to: *Old Rendcombian Society*
Please do not forget to add p&p where appropriate

Details and photos of the above items may be viewed at:-
<http://www.rendcombian.org.uk/Stuff.aspx>