

# **Old Rendcombian Society**

## **NEWSLETTER**



**MAY 2006**

**32nd ISSUE**

Editor  
W.J.D. WHITE

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## **Society Officers**

At the annual general meeting on 2nd July 2005, the following officers were elected:-

President:	Julian Comrie (1946-54)
Chairman:	Neil Lumby (1968-73)
Vice-Chairman:	Fiona Burge (1988-90)
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:	Richard Tudor (1973-80) Alex Brealy (1980-87; staff 1994-)
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 72nd Annual General Meeting**

Held on Saturday 2nd July in Room El at Rendcomb College

Present: Jane Gunner (1975-77), Neil Lumby (1968-73), Michael Miles (1943-50), Gerry Holden (headmaster 1999- ), Julian Comrie (1946-54), Colin Burden (staff 1963-97), Bill White (staff 1961-97), David Williams (1966-71), Richard Tudor (1973-80), David Henshaw (1940-49), Chris Wood (1965-71)

1. Apologies: Andy Stafford (1966-71), Fiona Burge (1988-90), Brian Smith (1965-72), Rev. Hussey (1974-78), Alex Brealy (1982-87), Peter Cockell (1943-53), C. G. Jefferies (1957-65), Charley Jeffery (1988-90), Frank Dutton (1936-44), Philip Griffiths ( 1940-43), Colin Hitchcock (1971-78), Chris Brisley (1941-50)

2. To receive the minutes of the 71st annual general meeting held on Sunday 4th July 2004 as published in the 2005 newsletter.

It was proposed by Julian Comrie and seconded by Michael Miles and passed unanimously that the minutes should be signed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

The secretary reported that the Friends of Rendcomb had advertised History I and History II on Amazon but so far there had been no sales. However the college was doing an excellent job of selling and had sold a dozen copies over the weekend for which the secretary was very grateful.

Bill White reported that the book written by the late Douglas Payne describing his time at Rendcomb during the war was nearly ready to go to the publishers.

Bill also explained that there are a number of photographs of this period that could be included.

Michael Martin (1926-33) had written a definitive history of Saul that the society was planning to get printed. It was hoped copies would be available on request in the autumn.

4. The Hon Treasurer's Report

The hon. treasurer circulated the report and explained that the society was now four years through the seven-year programme on making the O.R. subscription a termly deduction on a pupil's bill. This was having a cushioning effect on the fact that the 2005 leavers comprised a small class. There had been a trickle of late joiners during the year.

Total balances at year-end stood at £11,337.87.

The newsletter continued to be the major cost incurred during the year and the committee had noted that

proposed changes in the way letters were to be charged could have an impact.

The treasurer reported that there had been two £50 wins on premium bonds and that he was in the process of opening a higher yield account with the Alliance and Leicester. The society had purchased 50 sets of mats and coasters of which 5 sets had so far been sold.

Chris Wood also explained that the society had now taken on the cost of hosting the web site and thanked Colin Hitchcock for the continuing excellence of the site. The headmaster reported that the college had commissioned a shield from the Famous. It was proposed by Julian Comrie and seconded by Colin Burden that the accounts should be adopted. This was agreed unanimously.

#### 5. Election of Officers

It was proposed by Bill White and seconded by Chris Wood that Neil Lumby should remain as chairman.

The chairman reported that the vice-chairman, Charley Jeffery, had had to stand down from the committee as she was moving away. The chairman expressed his thanks for her enthusiastic contributions to the work of the committee.

It was proposed by Michael Miles and seconded by Richard Tudor that Fiona Burge should be the next vice-chairman. This was agreed unanimously.

The chairman went on to report that Michael Miles was stepping down from the committee after many years of service including 5 years as president. He expressed the society's thanks to Michael for all he had done.

It was proposed by Julian Comrie and seconded by Bill White that Jane Gunner should continue as hon. secretary. This was agreed unanimously.

The chairman also thanked in their absence, Des Knox (1968-75) and Stuart Honeyball for arranging such an excellent reunion for those who left 30 years ago. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who attended.

#### 6. Nomination of a Committee Member

The secretary had received no nominations. Bill White reported that he was looking through the list of local O.R.s to see who might be approached.

#### 7. Travel Bursary

Last year £1,000 had been made available by the society and there had been an additional £500 donated by Fred Batten.

Nicola Scarth, who had left in 2001, had been awarded the Fred Batten bursary as she was going out to Uganda to nurse in a hospital there.

Christine Dai from 6A was awarded a further £500 for a trip to Africa and the remaining £500 was earmarked for a group of 6B who had made an application for next summer.

It was proposed by Julian Comrie and seconded by Michael Miles that the travel bursary should be £1,000 again this year. It was agreed unanimously.

#### 8. Any other business

The headmaster explained that in partnership with parents the college was entering into an industrial mentoring scheme and invited O.R.s to become involved. An explanatory note would be printed in the 2006 newsletter.

There was some discussion about the merits of bringing the newsletter out earlier, as it had been this year. It was generally felt to be a good idea. The chairman thanked Bill White for yet another excellent newsletter. He then thanked the headmaster for making the college available and the meeting adjourned for the 85th anniversary dinner.

The meeting closed at 18.25 p.m.

### **Old Rendcombian Society AGM 2006**

You are invited to attend the 73rd annual general meeting of the Old Rendcombian Society on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2006 at Rendcomb College at 12.00 noon.

#### Agenda

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive the minutes of the 72nd a.g.m. held on 2nd July 2005.
3. To deal with matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive hon. treasurer's report
5. Election of officers:  
President (5 year term)

6. Nominations for 2 committee members  
All proposed and seconded nominations to reach Secretary by Friday 23rd June 2006
7. Travel Bursary
8. Any other business
9. Vote of thanks to the College

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

Sunday 2nd July 2006

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 11.15 a.m.        | Cricket match, lunch at college and tea in pavilion   |
| 12 noon           | Agm in Room E1  |
| 1.15 p.m.         | Hot lunch with vegetarian option in Reading Room.<br>Main course to be collected from servery for lunch in Reading Room.<br>Presentation to John Williams |
| 2.15 p.m.         | Cricket Match resumes on top  |
| 4.00 p.m. approx. | Tea in pavilion   |

Please let Jane Gunner or Chris Wood know if you want lunch to help catering for numbers.  
No charge - donations to O.R. society

Saturday 2nd December 2006      Rugby match  
Sunday 18th March 2007 (prov)      Hockey matches

All provisional dates and those not listed here will be shown on [www.rendcomb.org.uk](http://www.rendcomb.org.uk) as soon as they are agreed.

### **Sports Contacts**

Rugby	Mike Stark 01285 832314 (W) m.slark@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
Ladies' hockey	Chris Wood 01451 860871 (H) 01285 832314 (W) woodc@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
Men's hockey	Alex Brealy 01285 832363 (H) 01285 832314 (W) alex_brealy@hotmail.com
Ladies' netball & tennis	Sarah Bell 01285 832314 (W)
Cricket	Alex Brealy 01285 832363 (H) 01285 832314 (W) alex_brealy@hotmail.com

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

### **Rendcomb College Parents' Association Industrial Mentoring**

July 2005

*Dear Parents/Guardians/Friends of Rendcomb College and Junior School/Old Rendcombians*

In partnership with parents, the staff of Rendcomb College is always striving to improve facilities and experiences for our children. The RCPA works closely with staff to facilitate this process. We are writing to ask for your support in the field of careers advice. We realise that within the school, parents can provide a wealth of experience and advice from a wide range of careers, backgrounds and interests and we hope to use this expertise to benefit our pupils directly. We would like to set up a scheme of industrial mentoring. This could involve anything from a one-off careers talk, meeting with a pupil once a term to discuss their career plans, holding mock interviews with the pupil at relevant times, helping to compile a c.v., supervising the progress of their personal portfolio, providing or advising on work experience posts, to mock interviews at Oxbridge level. We are particularly interested in being able to help sixth formers with work experience, which is so vital to their university applications for many vocational subjects. The school would, of course, run an induction meeting for all volunteers to explain in detail how the scheme would work. Some of you may have colleagues or friends who would also be interested in assisting with this scheme which we

feel will be mutually rewarding for both pupils and mentors.

We will hold all information passed to us on a database, which the pupils can access, only via the careers adviser at the college.

If you are interested in helping with this scheme, please fill out the attached form at the back of the newsletter and return it to the college by the end of term. The form is also available on the school website [www.rendcombcollege.co.uk](http://www.rendcombcollege.co.uk) on the RCPA page and can be e-mailed to us direct via [info@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:info@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk). We hope to hold the induction meeting in September 2005.

Many thanks for your support.

Rendcomb College Parents' Association.

### Acting At Rendcomb

**George Davis** (1939-46) writes: I have of late been remembering the wonderful acting tradition at Rendcomb, certainly during the 1940s, and I was pleased to come into contact with **David Henshaw** O.R. (1940-47), who has given me invaluable help over a series of e-mails. **DWL-B** was the prime mover in this area, together with Mrs Lee-Browne who had a theatrical background. There was a good stage in what was then Big School, complete with catwalk, a side stage door and the double doors opening into the old Music Room, which were used in many productions. There was scenery in the tower, although most plays used hessian curtaining, and there was a wonderful costume collection kept in the tall cupboards on the first floor landing opposite the main staircase. Make up was usually overseen by **HUM** (the art master) and we were fortunate to have many



members of staff who were very keen and competent actors and actresses.

The first play I remember was not in fact, performed by us but by a group of travelling players whose name I forget but who visited the college in the autumn term of 1939, sponsored, I think, by CEMA, and who arrived in large furniture van (in which they also slept!) and performed Oliver Goldsmith's 'She Stoops to Conquer'. This was the first play I had ever seen and it instilled in me a love of theatre both on and off the stage that I have enjoyed ever since.

We were all encouraged to produce a play whenever we felt like it. The drill was that, having gathered together some kindred spirits, a play was decided on, always a one-acter such as 'Wanted Mr Stewart' or the 'Bishop's Candlesticks', and **DWL-B** was approached for his permission. He would either approve or tell us that it had been performed in the last four or five years and we should choose something else. Mrs Lee-Browne was then approached and, after looking at the play, would then sort out costumes. Both **DWL-B** and **HUM** helped with the makeup. The play was produced on a Saturday night before the weekly dancing and reported in the Rendcombian magazine. If you were producing a modern play, the head was asked for permission to smoke in the performance. His stock question was always: "Is it essential to the plot, chap?" and the reply was always in the affirmative!! I really don't know how we got away with it so often, particularly when Arnold Ridley's Ghost Train was produced, and, as the recording of a train rushing through the station was heard (the scene was set in the station waiting room), three of us were standing on chairs off set, frantically blowing cigarette smoke through a window to simulate railway engine smoke!!

Here are some of the most memorable productions put on during those years:-

--- George Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem, with **Katie Manifold** as Dorinda (her favourite stage instruction

being “Enter Dorinda mighty gay”!!) and **HUM** as the Squire with the memorable line after a night’s heavy drinking was “Oh, my head doth ache consumedly”. This became the whole school’s greeting to him every morning for the rest of term!

--- Twelfth Night with **Miss Carnell** as Olivia, Mrs Lee Browne as Viola, **Miss Alway** as Maria, **Willie Thomas** as Sebastian, we think **AGG Richards** as Orsino, and a couple of sixth formers whose names we can't recall who played Toby Belch and Andrew Aguecheek. Willie Thomas, (properly named William Powys Thomas) was a fine actor who, after volunteering as a Bevin Boy instead of being called into the forces, joined the company at Stratford Upon Avon as Powys Thomas, acting there and also at Stratford Ontario. His other claim to fame was that he was the son of the Rev. Bryn Thomas, known generally as the Red Vicar of Kemble. He was asked to preach in Rendcomb Church just the once! His brand of socialist religion was even a bit too much for that renowned left winger **JCJ**!!

--- Sweeney Todd the Demon Barber of Fleet Street starred **Norman Stone** as the barber, **Huey Palmer** as the lapidary, we think probably **Stan Treherne** as Mrs Lovett – the pie lady from next door, and I made my debut as prompter and a member of the jury. The highlight of this production was the barber’s chair that was a master’s chair, screwed to a hinged square of board at centre backstage, to which was attached a strong length of rope that passed through the hessian into the Music Room where waited a couple of heavies and a pile of mattresses so that as each victim had his throat cut, he was hauled backwards disappearing from sight and shooting head over heels onto the mattresses (or, as on one wonderful occasion, landing on the two heavies!!).



*Charley’s Aunt March 1954*

--- The most memorable production, however, was Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus with the title role being split between **Roland Wood** for the first half and **Willie Thomas** for the second which of course included the wonderful scene where Faustus’ time is up and the Devil has come to claim his own. I have a feeling that **J M Murray** played Mephistopheles, **David Henshaw** was one of Faustus’ retainers and again I was the prompter also taking the small part of the Vintner who had stolen Faustus’ spell book and was entertaining his friends in the tavern promising that he would get all the girls in the village dancing naked before them! Enter Dr Faustus; exit the Vintner in a not very good imitation of an ape! A non-speaking part of some note was that of Helen of Troy. **Mike Harries**, who was not regarded as feminine in any way, played this, but **RNDW** (who shared the production with **DWL-B**) believed he had facial bone structure of classical proportions! Mike himself felt a bit ambivalent about the whole thing but was prevailed upon to take the part. The big snag was that he was particularly hirsute. Even though only fifteen, he needed to shave twice a day and at the dress rehearsal his stubble could clearly be seen through the make up! For the actual performance, he was instructed not to shave until five minutes before the make up was applied but Roland, who had to kiss him/her, was not convinced that all was well!

Apart from such classical fare, one Xmas we were treated to a revue by **Norman Stone**, **Frankie Dutton** and others which consisted of a number of sketches, the highlight being the sight of **Rudy Hale** descending from the catwalk in a leopard skin leotard while the chorus sang a scurrilous ditty about his and **Bob Lewis’s** physical characteristics which went down like a lead balloon. The whole revue was full of in-house jokes and double entendres – I observed through a gap in the curtains a front row consisting of Dr and Mrs Gladstone, the Rev and Miss Inge, and sundry other local dignitaries who were looking at each other in total bewilderment. **DWL-B** was furious and that was the first and last revue, at least in my time! David Henshaw tells me of a performance of the Merchant of Venice that took place after I had left. The cast was **HUM** as

Shylock, Mrs Lee-Browne as Portia, Miss Gladstone as Nerissa, **Tim Denehy** as Antonio, **Teddy Jones** as Jessica; Bassanio was probably **Christopher Bailly-Lane** and **David Henshaw** as the Doge.

Wonderful memories – who needed television! Does the tradition live on?

PPS I have not mentioned the outdoor stage, which was not used during the wartime years. I subsequently saw a performance of Moliere's *Le Malade Imaginaire* in the early 1950s. A wonderful performance - but

Rendcomb midges certainly know how to bite!

Editor's notes:

DWL-B	The headmaster, Dennis Lee-Browne
HUM	Mr Molineaux, the art master
Katie Manifold	Taught French and subsequently went to live in Australia
Miss Carnell	Headmaster's secretary and also organised the college music
Miss Always	Taught mathematics
A G G Richards	Taught mathematics and physics
JCJ	John James, second master who taught history
RNDW	Robin Wilson, who taught English

The outdoor stage continued to be used for occasional productions by David Sells (staff 1955-83) in the '60s and '70s and for a junior play in the '80s. As George Davis says, midges were always a problem. Some O.R.s will no doubt recall acting in "The Ghost" by Plautus which they had been studying for the "Classics in Translation" exam in 1976. The "Sketches", the successor of George Davis's "revue", continued in much the same vein until the '80s despite embarrassing moments. They were revived briefly by Martin Griffiths (staff 1982-03) in a more controlled format!!

### **Rendcomb Reminiscences**

**David Henshaw** (1940-49) writes: I was so intrigued by many of the references in the O.R. newsletter that I determined to return to Rendcomb for this summer's O.R. day - the first time I had been inside the building since I left in 1949. The newsletter, and the visit, brings to life so many recollections. I feel I have been rather reclusive, not having maintained contact with my contemporaries. I don't know whether the following might be useful for publication in a future 'Old Rendcombian News'?

A reference in the newsletter to Ernest Neal's (1934-46) research on badgers reminds me of being recruited in the summer of 1942 or '43 to join one of his nocturnal badger watches in Conigree Wood. I seem to think **Stuart Monroe** (1940-46) and **Willie Walters** (1940-49) were also involved. When others were going to their dormitories we reported to the biology lab, dressed in our all-in-one boiler suits, which were the daily uniform of the time, and carrying overcoats. Ernest Neal briefed us and lent us each a watch with a luminous dial, a notepad and a very smelly and limp flock pillow.

We were each placed in the wood to leeward of a different badger set and settled for a three-hour vigil out of sight or earshot of each other. We recorded, as best we could, the timing of the emergence and disappearance of each badger or group of badgers. I remember most vividly a trio of younger badgers frolicking about not far away. I had details of fifteen or so badger events listed by the end of the vigil. Twice Neal loomed silently through the darkness carrying a thermos and dispensing mouthfuls of tepid tea. We trudged back to college in the small hours and fell into bed feeling very important. I was sorry, when I read one of Neal's books many years later, not to find specific mention of our stalwart contribution to science - but maybe many others had similar experiences?

**Frank Dutton's** (1936-44) reminiscence (31st issue, pp. 4/5) of the tuck shop in the thirties shows a dingy but quite extensive space. In the forties, when I was elected senior shopman by the meeting, the shop was housed in a small, cold cell beside the 'outer courtyard', which I recently noted is now the office of the deputy head of the junior school. Next to this was the 'hobbies room', open, I think, only to only forms 1 and 2, where a miniature railway circled the room at chest height, crossing the door on a drawbridge. You were allowed to bolt the door in order to let down the drawbridge safely, allowing the circulation of electric trains. This was a valued pretext for all sorts of nefarious activities behind the bolted door! Clearing the smoke before unbolting the door in response to any commanding knock was a perennial problem! Running the shop was done with great pride. Shame on the shopman who arrived with the keys to find an impatient queue waiting at the door! Quality and punctuality of service was a sine qua non for re-election. It was a veritable adolescent 'Are You Being Served?' There was a punctilious weekly stock-taking and banking of the takings with the elected treasurer at his 'bank locker' in Pillar Hall, and the periodic ordering of stock, sending off order forms to Rowntrees, Cadburys and Frys. I suspect the supplier had no idea that they were dealing with a fourteen-year-old!

(Many O.R.s found the responsibilities given to them by the general meeting were an invaluable preparation

for later life - Ed). The shop opened for twenty minutes each weekday evening. Maintaining a stimulating range of confectionery was a matter of great pride - Rowntree's pastilles and gums, Mars bars, Milky Way and Maltesers were the mainstay; football boot studs and tins of dubbin were also in demand in season.

As I sit a heraldic lion's head looks down at me from the wall. I am ashamed - but also proud - to say that it was made from lead sheet torn from the Temple roof. Alas, the temple, a small circular folly, no longer stands at the brink of the steep escarpment above the lake, beyond where Park House now stands. It was decaying before we committed our thoughtless vandalism. The lion's head was a higher school certificate art project under Molly's (H. U. Molineaux) supervision. It was made in the 'puppet workshop', a tiny room behind the garages at the Old Rectory. One climbed into this workshop through a small window; we all did; the only door led into a garage, and was permanently locked. It was a very secret workspace. Molly always heralded his arrival with, 'now then, mister, what's going in in here?' as he clambered along the back of the outbuildings and appeared framed in the window. I first made a clay model of my lion's head, copying from a line drawing in a stuffy historical architecture book, then a cast in dry sand. I seem to recollect I melted the lead over a Bunsen burner and poured the molten metal into the cast. I don't recollect that Molly ever questioned where I had got the lead from or whether I was competent to do the casting. 'Health and Safety', where were you then?

**Frank Dutton** writes (31st issue, p.34) of a miniature locomotive housed beyond what was then the physics laboratory in the stable block. I don't think the locomotive was still there in 1940 when my age group started to explore the place. On the other hand the Great Western Railway served us well, certainly until 1949 to **John Gosden's** (1947-54) recollection (p.34) that the railway came no closer than Kemble Junction. In the forties those travelling to school from London changed at Kemble Junction, where one could catch a



*Temple, 1957*

local train either to Tetbury or to Cirencester Town station, now flattened by a road scheme. Those travelling from the north, like myself, changed at Cheltenham (Lansdown) and caught a train bound for Swindon and beyond on a single track line, stopping at Cheltenham St. James, Charlton Kings, Andoversford, Withington, Chedworth, Foss Cross and Cirencester Watermoor. It was at these two Cirencester stations that we were picked up by the hired bus.

**John Gosden** also speaks of a railway cutting passed when walking to Chedworth Roman villa. It is a tunnel rather than a cutting, which I recollect as I passed through it on the train at the beginning and end of every term, and walked through it on visits to the villa. It was a little more than a quarter of a mile long, and straight, so that you could see the other end as soon as your eyes grew accustomed to the dark on entering. It had been built for double track, but whether the second track had ever been laid was not known. There was certainly plenty of room to walk as the track ran close to the west wall. I was never in the tunnel when a train came through, I'm glad to say. There was probably no Sunday service, and it was invariably Sunday afternoon when we ventured as far as that.

(The line was closed in 1963/4 and the track and tunnel are now on private land - Ed.)

## **Obituaries**

We record with great sadness the deaths of the following members of the society and send our sincere condolences to their families.

**Anthony Reynolds** (1976-78) died of a heart attack in July 2004.

**Michael A.C. Levett** (1934-42) died with his wife in a car accident in Spain in March 2005. His brother Peter (1934-40) writes:

It is with great sadness that I announce the sudden death of my brother Michael A.C. Levett (1934-42) and his sweet wife, Norma, on March 16th 2005, in a car accident while they were on holiday in southern Spain. Their bodies were returned to their home town of Guelph, Ontario, Canada for funeral and burial services. An autopsy report as to the possible cause of this head on collision has still not been received from the Spanish government. Michael really enjoyed his sojourn at Rendcomb and seemed to get on much better with Denis Lee-Browne than I did! I always seemed to be in his bad books for some reason or other. I guess that I was too

much of a free spirit and a bit of a rebel. The loss of Michael and Norma is a huge wrench for the whole family and they will be for ever in our memories.

**Austen Magor** (1931-36) died in April 2005.

The **Rev. W. K. A. Hussey** (chaplain and priest-in-charge of Rendcomb parish) died in July 2005 in Cornwall aged 78 years. The Bishop of Truro conducted his funeral service. Bill Hussey was the first person to be appointed as chaplain. He quickly involved himself in college life, enjoying not only his 'R.E.' periods but also contributing to the history teaching. Staff and pupils soon appreciated the value of having a full-time chaplain, and many formed a close bond with him. In particular, his Sunday services provided encouragement and inspiration. Bill was also very active as a priest in the village, villagers appreciating the time he found to chat to them or to his wife, Joyce, when she took round the parish newsletter.

Amanda Currens (née Jones) sends this tribute:-

The Hussey family arrived at Rendcomb, as did I in 1974. I didn't know it at the time, but it was to prove the start of a friendship that would still prevail 30 years later.

Bill Hussey, or more simply 'Rev' as we referred to him, cut a very donnish, slightly aloof figure. In a juvenile way we teased him for being a cleric. It was very definitely uncool, to our mind, to be in the clergy and we could not see the incisive mind and keen wit that hid behind the dog collar. This initial image was to be radically altered for me when I did seventh term Oxbridge.

Until then, frankly, I hadn't come across Bill very much as he was not involved in my 'A' level teaching.

However, through Sunday morning services, I did appreciate that he was clearly very well connected in the church and brought a wide range of interesting preachers to Rendcomb.

In my Oxbridge term Bill was detailed to give me some one to one preparation for the entrance papers. These were not lessons as I had known them – they were tutorials. To me these sessions and the assignments I was given seemed somewhat vague and unstructured. But in fact they weren't - he had a clear agenda. Bill always endeavoured to get me to see 'the bigger picture' and to think 'outside the box' - both of which terms he would have definitely put a red line through in any essay I produced.

I remember with particular fondness the day when Bill took me to look round Oxford. He was kindness, courtesy and patience itself as we traipsed around endless quadrangles and colleges. He was also very humorous in teasing me that I would have far rather been traipsing around the dress shops than the colleges – quite true!

I duly got into Oxford, although I didn't stay. That doesn't matter however. I nevertheless regard with great affection, respect and gratitude the part Bill played in my education - and for that I will always be very grateful.

A personal tribute by Christopher Pulford (1970-77):-

Bill Hussey succeeded the Rev. Sydney Lambert as chaplain of Rendcomb College and priest in charge of Rendcomb village. He arrived at Rendcomb in the mid 1970s at a time when I was struggling to come to terms with what I thought was my calling to the Anglican ministry. Bill never embraced the 'muscular Christianity' popular among public school chaplains at the time. He was however, interested in gently nurturing the spiritual development of individuals and demonstrated both pastoral sensitivity and a dry sense of humour. Bill prepared Nicholas Smith and I (and several others) to be servers at communion services in Rendcomb church. I was always fascinated and amused by his extraordinarily refined 'Oxford' English and at times his rendition of the eucharist sounded almost worthy of a Monty Python sketch! It fell on Bill's shoulders to prepare Oxbridge students for the general paper and his tutorial style meetings in the rectory gave us valuable insights on how to tackle questions on ethics and how to be interesting in an interview. He could appear aloof but was actually well aware of what was going on. Bill caught me on one occasion entertaining a girl friend to tea in my study bedroom on lower deck (a grave crime in those days); later that day, the senior resident master, John Willson, challenged me about this misdemeanour and to my relief was actually highly amused that one of Bill's servers had been caught with an innocent young lady in his study bedroom.

Bill left Rendcomb to become chaplain of Berkhamsted School. Years later he proved to be very helpful in briefing me about Berkhamsted when I applied for and secured the same position. Bill had deep insights and a profound understanding of school dynamics. He was able to describe an academic community without being in the least bit unkind or judgmental about the individuals concerned.

Some time passed before I was to speak to Bill again. On this occasion it was at a crisis point in my church career in the early 1990s. Again, he was calm, sensitive, reassuring and compassionate. He genuinely valued people and brought a wealth of experience, pastoral wisdom and psychological insight to complex problems. I last spoke to Bill several years ago when he was somewhat incapacitated. It was characteristic of the man and the priest that he demonstrated genuine interest and concern for how I was faring and clearly bore his illness

with great courage. On behalf of all the O.R.s who knew Bill and especially all of Charlie's old mates, I extend deep sympathy to his family.

**Bob Muchamore** (1946-53) died in September 2004. We are grateful to John Gosden (1947-54) for the following account of Bob's life:-

Bob and I met in 1947. Although he was a year ahead of me, we shared a common interest in natural history, and spent many summer evenings in Conigre Wood waiting for the badgers to show themselves as well as afternoons exploring the countryside around Rendcomb. We also visited each other during the holidays. In 1951 I saw my first television at Bob's house in Crewe, seeing the University Boat Race, with Oxford rowing strongly as they sank. On that same visit we also went to Aintree to see the Grand National – a gesture of friendship on Bob's part, as he did not share my interest in horses and racing. Bob left Rendcomb for national service in the army (REME), and I followed him a year later, meeting up at a technical training unit in the same corps.

Bob spent a leave with me at home in Hove, where we tried out the steps we had learned at Rendcomb in the Regent Ballroom, Brighton. There we met two sisters, and shortly thereafter Bob began to take instruction for converting to the Catholic Church. Bob married the elder sister, Joan, on July 20th 1956. We lost touch after I went to university and Bob started work with Hanovia, an electrical appliance manufacturer. For much of the rest of Bob's story I am indebted to his third son, Clive.

“Bob and Joan then had 6 children – within the space of 6 years”

“In 1969 we emigrated to Australia as £10 emigrants (under the assisted passage scheme, long since abandoned). We disembarked in Melbourne and then caught a train to Adelaide (1000km north of Melbourne). After a brief stay in the immigrant hostel mum and dad settled in the house in Elizabeth Sound where mum still lives today - 35 years up the track. With a growing family and his father coming to live with us, Dad did the plans and then built a two-bedroom extension onto the house. Thus we went from a three bedroom to a five bedroom house.

Dad worked for the following companies in Australia:

General Electric – on the road as a rep.

Johns Industrial Electrics - they imported products like hot plates, electronic components etc.

He also designed gas switching and test gear, which became used in the field.

Johnston & Paul – As ‘office manager’ he taught himself to write computer programs to handle payroll and the company finances, stock control and re-ordering.

Finally he worked for himself for a while before retiring.

He probably became busier in retirement than in his working life. He assisted with literacy for adults, made wooden toys for his grand children and play groups, built a spinning wheel and learnt to spin wool, got involved with family history and tracing the origins of his ancestry, and wrote articles for the family history societies.

He was also one of the people who assisted in getting the Freecen project up and running From the Freecen web site - <http://freecen.rootsweb.com/#Bob>

As for his hobbies – well where do I start?

He had a love for Mickey Mouse – loved the old cartoons

Model trains (Hornby) – had a magnificent railway in the attic of our house in the U.K. and built one that would run from one end of the house to the other in Australia.

The many cross stitch tapestries he did are now much-loved souvenirs that hang in his family's and other houses.

Taught himself computer programming and built one of the first kit home computers (Dick Smith project kit).

In those days it was a cassette tape unit, black and white display and 8 Mbytes of ram. There was competition for writing programmes for the unit and a programme that he wrote won him first prize of a printer for the pc.

Taught himself to read music and then to play keyboards - top and bottom registers and foot pedals.

Became involved in the Trees for Life Program – this involved growing trees from seed to help the rejuvenation of farms and stop erosion.

Dad was never one for going drinking in bars and clubs, gambling or watching sport - but much preferred to be spending time at home doing things around the house or working on a project to assist someone else.

He achieved his life's ambition of having a home, a wife and family, grand-children and this was all that he ever wanted.”

We regained contact after I retired and moved to Thailand, and Bob found my new address in an O.R. newsletter. We did a lot of catching up by e-mail, and Bob also put me in touch with Douglas Tidy, who had taught both of us in his time at Rendcomb.

Bob Muchamore – Passed away suddenly at his home in South Australia on 5th September 2004, aged 70.

Born in Taunton, Somerset in 1934, Bob was one of the pioneers of the FreeCEN project, from the very

earliest days, both as a stalwart of the Devon Project and as king-pin of the overall project management. Bob served on the FreeCEN exec. through some of its most difficult times, only stepping down 5 months before he died. Throughout his time with the project, even after his “retirement”, Bob was utterly tireless in offering freely of his encyclopaedic knowledge of all things FreeCEN to those in need of help. His contribution to the project cannot be overstated, and he will be hugely missed.

The **Hon. Robert Wills**, a brother of Sir David Wills and a college governor in the ‘70s died in 2005. In 1965 he founded the Farmington Trust which supports Christian education for children.

The **Rev. S. T. Lambert** (rector of Rendcomb 1967-74) died in December 2005, aged 88 years. Sydney Lambert was the last rector of the combined parishes of Rendcomb and Colesbourne. After he left, the parish of Rendcomb was combined with the chaplaincy of the college. Initially, the college came into contact with him only for church services and preparation for confirmation - later he began to do some teaching, paving the way for a full time chaplain. Sydney’s father was a vicar in Gloucester and three of his four sons became priests. Sydney had led an adventurous life before coming to Rendcomb; he was a missionary in Singapore and an army chaplain - apart from being head boy of the King’s School, Gloucester! The parish much appreciated Sydney’s warm friendship and jovial personality. He was much involved in parish activities in which his wife, Isabelle, and their young family played a leading part. His wide experience with all types of people made it easy for him to relate to the college pupils who valued his help and wise advice. After Rendcomb, Sydney was Vicar of St. Stephen’s, Cheltenham and then at Bourton-on-the-Hill. He retired to Bengeworth, Evesham. On December 13th a large congregation celebrated his life in a Requiem Eucharist, presided over by the Rt. Rev. Derek Bond. John and Anne Holt and Bill White attended.

**Graham H. W. Bodman** (1936-43) died in March 2005. In the following article his brother-in-law, Maurice Bullen (1934-42) reflects on their life at Rendcomb and pays tribute to Graham, his best friend at Rendcomb. Graham came to Rendcomb in 1935 - a year later than I did. Both of us were lucky recipients of a Wills Foundation scholarship. Four people soon formed a close group - Graham (Gra), John (Div) Quick, Philip (Pa) Cutts and me (Ma). Within this group Graham and I were especially close, and together we enjoyed many different informal activities.

Though neither of us became a biologist or musician, natural history and music became very important to us. Ernest Neal (1934-46) was our biology teacher, and he inspired in us both a lasting interest in the natural world - it was at Rendcomb that he did most of the fieldwork that led to his seminal book on the natural history of the badger. Sydney Shimmin came out from Cheltenham every week to teach music appreciation and give piano lessons, and the headmaster’s wife echoed his love of music. Mrs (Freda) Lee-Browne came from the famous Austin musical family and there were regular singing evenings in their drawing-room, where Freda accompanied on her grand piano. Graham and I joined the church choir, starting as trebles and progressing through alto and tenor to bass - with a gap during our voice break. I well recall a landmark week (1939?) when Arturo Toscanini came to London to conduct all 9 Beethoven symphonies and those of us with a serious interest in music were allowed to stay up late and listen to those concerts. H. U. Molyneaux was art master, and he taught us to make puppets, build a marionette theatre, and give performances to the school. Perhaps the person who most influenced us was J. B. (Jack) Fell, (1934-73) who came to Rendcomb from Cambridge to teach physics and chemistry – we soon developed a great rapport with, and affection for, him. In spare time we learned how to build wireless sets. Precious pocket money was diverted from the tuck-shop to buy components by post from the Premier Radio Company - at first for simple crystal receivers, and then on to the magic of thermionic valves! Amateur listeners were helping knowledge of radio-wave propagation at that time, and we spent hours listening to short-wave transmissions. We sent out postcards to foreign stations confirming broadcasts we had heard, and the foreign stamps on their acknowledgements were in great demand. We developed an interest in photography too, and were allowed to set up a darkroom in one of the college cellars. Roll film was hand-developed by see-sawing it through a dish of liquid chemical under a dim red light, and it was thrilling to watch the creamy emulsion gradually change into the negative image of our pictures. Early in the war Jack Fell left Rendcomb to do radar research in the RAF, so arrangements were made for us to continue our chemistry and mechanical-drawing studies at Cheltenham Technical College - rain or shine, we cycled to and fro. At that time the skies were full of aircraft of all kinds, and identification was guided by a regular monthly postal delivery of The Aeroplane Spotter. It was important (ask me not why!) to know at what height a plane was flying, so Graham and I put our knowledge of mechanics and geometry into practice by designing and making at least 2 different hand-held height gauges. Soon visual identification was not enough for us, and we learned to identify different types of plane by their sound alone. One summer term we were both in the same dormitory, and very early one morning both of us were suddenly wide awake - what was that strange sound? German Dorniers were flying low down the Churn valley.

After Rendcomb, Graham went to Birmingham to study engineering, while I (with a long break due to illness)

studied 'physics with radio' at Bristol - the word electronics hadn't been invented! Graham did his military service with the Royal Engineers, and was very pleased to belong to that group. He became a skilled marksman, and proudly represented his regiment at the rifle-shooting competitions at Bisley.

By the late 1940s we were both in Bristol. Graham had joined an engineering company where his father was works manager, and I had started work at the General Hospital. My sister Mary was studying at Bath College, and we all met regularly. One focal point was the hostelry where the Bristol Motorcycle and Light Car Club had its base. I had a Royal Enfield bike, and Graham and I spent many days (and nights) enjoying ourselves in time and navigational trials.

After a few years Graham emigrated to South Africa, where he spent the rest of his professional life. He worked for several large engineering firms, and also for the National Bureau of Standards. As his experience grew he became a partner in a consultancy giving advice to major South African companies on value engineering. He married Wendy (a nurse, and keen conservationist) and in due course there were two children. He was delighted with the richness and diversity of the South African natural history, and travelled widely. The love of music, which had been fostered at Rendcomb also thrived, and he was proud to sing bass in the Johannesburg Bach choir. In the Drakensberg mountain range there is a famous place where the Blyde River flows through an awesomely deep winding gorge, and one of Graham's civil engineering projects was to design and install bridges over this gorge. On one of my visits to that country it was great to walk over 'Graham's bridges'! After some years came a very sad and stressful period in Graham's life; Wendy was found to have a degenerative neural disease which was incurable, and from which she died.

Every few years Graham came back to England to visit his family and friends. Although he loved his adopted country his roots were 'back home' and he always felt that, when his professional life was completed, it would be time to return to where he really belonged. When he was nearing retirement he visited the south-west of England again. By this time Mary had settled in Dorset in our parents' old home and when Graham was with me in our Gloucestershire village of Uley I said to him (on the spur of the moment) "Why don't you give Mary a ring?" She invited him down for lunch - and a wonderful thing happened. Mary had never married, and soon they discovered that they were right for each other. Before long she had flown out to Johannesburg, where they were married.

When South African affairs had been completed they settled in Dorset, and Graham soon began to play a full part in his new community - both in the local church and in civic matters. The church had a valuable collection of plate that had never been documented, and Graham catalogued and photographed every item. Serious problems in the church tower were discovered when the bells needed to be re-hung, and Graham's engineering knowledge was invaluable in helping to organise what needed to be done. For many years Mary and Graham enjoyed life to the full in their rural community; he gardened, and made many things in his large workshop. They travelled extensively (both in this country and abroad) and both enjoyed immensely the high mountains of Europe.

In his mid-seventies Graham began to experience medical problems, and Parkinson's disease was diagnosed. There followed a long period of gradual deterioration, during which Mary looked after him valiantly. Their neighbours were wonderfully supportive, and this help enabled Graham to stay at home for longer than would otherwise have been possible. Eventually he had to be transferred to a nursing-home in Sherborne, where he was well looked after. He died there in March.

Graham was a man of high standards. He enjoyed all things that were good and of high quality - music, craftsmanship, food, theatre, wine, scenery and much more. He was considerate and helpful to everyone he met. Above all, he was my best friend and brother-in-law; he will be sorely missed.

**Christine Sudbury**, widow of Rev. Peter Sudbury, chaplain and priest-in-charge of Rendcomb 1986-96, died from cancer in September 2005.

All O.R.s and staff who knew Christine were deeply shocked to learn of her death after a relatively short illness. It was so difficult to grasp that some one so vital and lively had been taken from us. She will be remembered especially for her warm hospitality in the rectory, her involvement in so many college activities, and her cheerful and always sensible help in the secretary's office. With Peter she contributed greatly to the happiness of Rendcomb during their time there and enjoyed maintaining contact with O.R.s and staff after she moved to Cheltenham. Her funeral service at St. Philip and St. James Church in Cheltenham, with which she was very actively involved, was taken by the vicar, assisted by Canon David Nye, who took Peter's funeral service and also the service at the crematorium. Among those in the large congregation were: Fiona Burge (née Reichwald), Tristan Day, Jane Gunner, Matthew Faircloth, Mrs Hughes and David, Mrs Barnes and Ralph, Chris Huck, John Shenton with his parents, Anne Boyd, Anne Vickery, David and Judy White, Edward Thring, Mike Newby, Bridget Trump (née Goldsmith), Graham Smith, Julia Morris, David and Joan Hawkswell, John and Charlotte Holdaway, Chris and Penny Wood, Martin and Aileen Graham, James and Jane Stutchbury, John and Anne Holt, Mr and Mrs R. Edmonson, Mrs S. Mais, David and Joan Essenhigh. Bill White read a short story which Peter and Christine always enjoyed.

John Tolputt (headmaster 1987-99) has sent this tribute to Christine:-

Christine was one of those special people who put herself last without a trace of solemn or selfish piety. Calm, warm, generous of heart, she seemed to know instinctively what other people needed and would always put herself to trouble rather than anyone else. She was a perfect vicar's wife for Peter, but could make fun of the role too. In fact they both often seemed properly tongue in cheek about it, but the bishop's lunches were sumptuous, her cake stall the pride of the fete, and she never missed church. When Peter died one founder's day, we were all shocked and stunned: "Don't be mizz", she said, forgetting her own terrible grief, in caring for ours.

She was rarely cross, but, when she was, you knew because she became more Welsh. "I made them all say good morning" she'd say in a strong Welsh accent of pupils she'd passed on the way to school. Her constant calm was spiced by cheerful and kindly campaigns against whingers, gloom-mongers, and anyone who took themselves too seriously. It was a lucky day for me when she decided to join Anne Purdon and latterly Judi Stocks in the office. Christine loved being at the heart of Rendcomb, where passed through all the business of the school, from recruiting pupils to occasionally showing them the door. Two against one, she joined with Anne or Judi to tease, confound, cheer up and look after me. She was



goodness and integrity through and through, which somehow made all the happier the moments when I stood beside her while she said into the phone: "No, I am so sorry; the headmaster is away on school business and will not be back for the rest of today."

When Christine left Rendcomb, Patta and I hoped for many more years of seeing her in Cheltenham and were so saddened by her untimely death. Typically, she did not want to bother people with her illness and asked her close friends and family to keep it quiet. The only consolation is that she was a person at peace with herself and would have met her cruel fate with acceptance and unquestioning faith.

**Basil J. Lumby** (1933-38) died in December 2005. His son Neil (1968-73) has sent this tribute:-

In November 2005 my father, Basil Lumby, died after a longish fight against cancer - an insidious growth in his brain, which all but destroyed his personality and the good memories I should have of him. It's difficult to believe that he has gone but I am glad that time has already allowed me to forget the nightmare of an unhinging mind.

Dad was born in 1922 and came to Rendcomb in the early 1930s. I gather he spent most of his school years in hospital fighting middle ear infections, which, in the absence of antibiotics, led to mastoid operations and lifelong deafness (a factor which kept him out of active service in the war). However, Rendcomb was the first profound influence on his life (his love of the natural world and gardening) and in particular the headmaster, Lee-Browne, who understood his nature (non-academic apparently!) and gave him the support and encouragement his father never would.

After Rendcomb he worked on a farm at Fawler in Oxfordshire and during the war managed a dairy farm in Sussex (where he met his first wife to be) - he was a member of the Home Guard but, by his own admission, not very good at it! At the end of the war he went to Seal Hayne agricultural college (financed by a family friend because his father doubted his ability) and passed his farming qualifications. However, work on the land in the UK had become much more difficult to find as men returned to their jobs from fighting.

In 1949 he applied to the colonial service for a job on the ill-fated 'Groundnut Scheme' in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) as an agricultural officer and was accepted. Dad arrived in East Africa in 1950. The scheme was short-lived but he stayed on and spent a few years conducting censuses in the southern provinces - mostly foot safaris with porters etc. because the area was so inaccessible to vehicles.

It was during this time that he became friendly with Ionides (a renowned expert on snakes in his time and head game keeper of the Selous Game Reserve) and was introduced to the second most profound influence on his life, the Ngindo tribe (his scout was Ngindo). By all accounts a primitive forest people who lived off the land (Dad would say 'with the land') taking only what they needed to survive. Apparently, he 'took off' with his scout (only taking his cap and pipe) to live with this tribe and completely lost any sense of time - six weeks at least! It all left an indelible impression...

Dad enjoyed the company of Africans and understood them - I believe they liked him as well. He was unusual in that he made the effort to learn to speak Swahili fluently (not bad for a non-academic!).

In 1952 his first wife, Sylvia, joined him in Tanganyika. He survived meningitis. She survived two ectopic pregnancies. In 1958 I was adopted followed by my sister in 1962. By then he had been co-opted into the

Fisheries Department purely because he had a keen interest in fishing (that's how things were done then) - he became something of an expert on East African fisheries. Dad knew Tanzania as well as any European could - he'd lived in Kilwa, Mbeya, Mwanza, Moshi, Arusha, Tanga, Dar-es-Salaam - and he loved the place. By 1971 it had become impossible to stay in Tanzania and return to the UK became inevitable. Dad spent ten years applying himself to the 'art' of driving instruction and very well qualified he became at it. At the beginning of 1981 Sylvia died and by 1982 he was re-married to Margaret, his second wife. On retirement in 1987, they moved to Southern Ireland to be close to her family and Dad spent 18 years developing a fine garden (working 'with' the land) out of an acre of bog, fishing for salmon on the River Laune and writing his memoirs until his death at 84. Sadly, he never returned to Africa.

These few paragraphs do him little justice (there are many stories to tell). If you gauge his life by celebrity or power then it amounts to very little, but if you gauge it by experience it is quite extraordinary. I wish I'd had it myself!

**Mrs Maisie Tarrant** died in March this year. She and her husband, Reg, will no doubt be remembered as well known villagers by older O.R.s. Reg is very frail but was able to attend the funeral at Rendcomb.

**Arthur Wilcox** (1921-28) died in January 2006 aged 96. He came to Rendcomb at the age of 10 and often spoke of his happy days there. He became a professor of mathematics: one of his publications was a popular scientific book entitled "Moon Rocket".

**Anna de Lisle Wells** (1994-2000) died tragically on March 15th 2006. At her funeral at Temple Guiting church her brother, James (1990-95), gave a brave and very poignant address. Over 400 people attended the funeral with many from the racing community.

Among representatives of the college and O.R.s were:

Tom and Freddie Lait, Lottie Webb, Sam and Mr Hicks, Laura and Sarah Donovan, Helen Mizon, Antonia Gilbert, Phil Webb, Harry Aldrich-Blake, Bianca and Mrs Mann, Jenny and Mrs Mais, Gemma Leathart, Nick Hall, Will Warrington, Carlos Garcia, Will Witchell, James and William Brittain-Jones, Mrs and Ed Farnsworth, Roz Frazer-Holland, Sophie Sprawson, Yuki Takanashi, the headmaster, Mr and Mrs Stutchbury, Mr Wood, Mr Brealy and Mrs Gill.

### Congratulations

Congratulations to:

**Olivia du Monceau** (1998-2001) on obtaining 1st class honours in theatre and performance design at the Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts.

**James Smith** (1990-97) on being awarded a Ph.D in mathematics at Imperial College, London.

**Fiona Hicks**, daughter of **Stephen** (1969-76) and **Tessa Hicks** (1974-76) who is head girl at Rendcomb this year.

### Births

To Kerri and **Roland Martin** (1982-89), a daughter, Jemima Florence, December 2004

To Simon and **Charley Jefferies** (née Stephens, 1988-90) a son, Jasper Richard Royals

To Rupert and **Rebecca Wolfenden** (née Hodgkinson, 1988-90) a son, Henry

### Marriages

**Justine Platt** (1988-90) to Samuel Patterson, May 2005, in Virginia

**Julian Norbury** (1984-89) to Katherine Carter, July 2005

**Lucy Brummitt** (1988-90) to Chris Cartwright - 2005

**Tim Hill** (1991-98) to **Rachel Gilyead** (1996-98) July 2005 (below left)

### Memorial

Peter Raggatt, son of **Colin Raggatt** (1920-26) who died in 2004, visited the college in July last year to scatter his father's ashes as his father had requested, and to plant a small oak tree on a site overlooking the lake.



*Anna Peters, Georgina Fan and Hannah Nichols*

### **Travel Bursary**

**Nicola Scarth** (1994-2001) writes about her visit to Uganda:

After a gap of over three years, it was a fantastic feeling to be stepping out onto this beautiful continent again. I was going to be working at a hospital in Uganda for six weeks as part of my nursing degree. It was quite nerve racking. I was imagining the worst - crowded wards, poor hygiene, smells and generally poor conditions. Luckily these fears were unfounded and although there was an obvious lack of money, the general principles of nursing were the same. The hospital is called Kiwoko and is a mission hospital set up in 1987 by Dr Ian Clarke after the terrible devastation that former president Idi Amin caused. As it is a mission hospital the government provide only 10% of the budget, and most of that originates from the World Bank. Sixty per cent comes from donations and charities and the last 30% is from the patients. Patients though will never be turned away just because they can't afford it, as there is a fund for the poorest of the poor. Unfortunately the poor do not realise this so do not go until the last moment when it is sometimes too late.

I would start my morning at 7 a.m. (and they say students are lazy!) and start with damp dusting all the surfaces including the mattresses not being used. Every Monday morning the patients would get kicked out of the ward so that the whole ward could be scrubbed and buckets of water chucked onto the floor. I thought this was very impressive and something that perhaps should be adopted by English hospitals. There was actually less for a Ugandan nurse to do, because all the patients have attendants, who are usually family, that do all the basic care for them, like giving them breakfast, getting them washed and dressed or making the bed. After prayers it was time for wound dressings, discharges and drug rounds, it was all very relaxed and laid back. Despite this everything was still completed, not quite on time, but it did get done!

The hospital had a rather chronic shortage of doctors at one point, with only 2 full time and 1 part time for 200 patients! This included 24hr care so they had to be on call every other night, the medical students certainly worked hard! Notwithstanding this a doctor will see a patient every day, something that definitely does not happen in England.

Every Tuesday was the AIDS clinic, and a doctor would see about 150 patients. The hospital's catchment area had a population of about 500,000, of this it was estimated that about 65,000 had HIV/AIDS - just over 10%. Uganda is the only country (probably in the world) so far to decrease their HIV/AIDS rate. This is mainly due to the fact that it does not shy away from the problem, but admits what it is and how it occurs. Education is the biggest factor that can help fight against AIDS and Uganda has quite good education programmes, especially in the urban areas. Kiwoko is quite a rural hospital, where AIDS projects are still being set up. The clinic had only just started and only about 500 people were on the books. Of those only 40 are on anti-retro viral drugs. When the statistics are given out, the numbers are too big to have an impact, everyone knows that AIDS is a huge problem. It is not until one sees it first hand that it affects one. To see 150 patients, all of whom have AIDS, patiently queuing to see one doctor is a sight not easily forgotten and it slowly dawns that Africa is going to be completely devastated in 5-10 years time. Already parents are looking after their children's children. Fifty percent of the population is under 15 and the life expectancy is about 38. Going out into the community was quite an experience, the poverty hits you smack in the face. These people live on the bare minimum. They really don't have much, yet still manage to survive. It does make one wonder how Africa will be able to stand on its own two feet without trade justice and with the corrupt politicians that line their pockets at the world's expense.

Uganda is a beautiful country; it has the friendliest people I have met. They really want to welcome you and are so hospitable. A tourist is still quite a rare thing, so people wave to you and greet you, unlike Kenya and Tanzania where a white person is seen as a bag of money! It was an amazing experience and I would like to

thank the O.R. Society for helping me get there. I was awarded the bursary generously donated by **Fred Batten** (1926-31).

### Twelve Years On...

From **Fr. Dominic O'Connor** (staff 1986-93, then known as Des) writes:

Finding myself back in England on a sabbatical after twelve years in the States, and with my career reaching a cross-roads, the need and the time were there to reflect on the past, as well as the future. With the realisation that twenty years ago, I had arrived at Rendcomb as a bachelor master, I wished to contribute something to the O.R. newsletter that has kept me in touch with a world which was once (at least it seemed to be) my life and at the same time - in some measure - to return a debt of gratitude to the school. Keeping in touch with O.R. staff and students - especially receiving out of the blue emails (e.g. from Petra Glover, née Watts) and out of the way meeting places (e.g. Vaughan Tredwell and wife in New York City) as well as being able to take some of the class of '99 to the pub before they graduated - has only added to the desire.

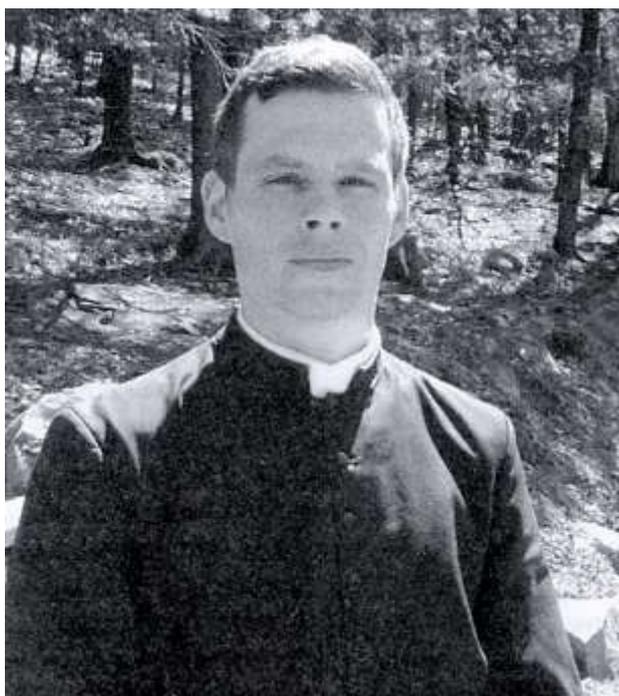
After leaving Rendcomb in the Christmas of '93 with a send off from the second form (graduating class of '99) that I had not expected - their idea of a leaving present that I needed was a kiss-a-gram - I ended up teaching in Zimbabwe with my brother. A beautiful country and wonderful people, now sadly suffering greatly. It was there through a delightfully eccentric but influential priest, Fr. Bufo, that I decided to pursue my vocation - it did take him many hours and much beer to convince me. This path took me for three years to the bitter cold and hot humid summers of Minnesota. There I completed my initial seminary training - happy and character forming years. However, the experience of the climate has made me vow never to fly Northwest in case there is a diversion there!

After that I moved to Pennsylvania and joined a newly formed group, The Society of Saint John. Initially we were resident in a boarding school, in some ways very similar to Rendcomb, before moving into our own property. I spent a year in a French monastery in 2000 - one of the most formative years of my life - before being ordained back in the USA in the summer of 2001.

During my period with the Society I had various positions and various degrees of success: running the novice program (much like Godman House under the Sykes, but no one made me an egg sarnie but someone did provide some whisky). The finances (somehow we survived but people did question the bike expenditure) and at one stage they actually put me in charge - I am glad they did not take up any references from **Martin Griffiths** (staff 1982-2003)! And so after eight years, time for a change "Quo Lux Ducit" and in any case enough of me...

-x-x-x-x-x-

After my return from Zimbabwe in the late summer of 1994, sitting in the Bathurst with a group of staff, pupils and ORs, and more importantly with a Guinness, I decided that people had better know about my latest career move. Their reaction was one of disbelief, amusement and affable cynicism. Most gave me a month if things went well. **Paul Sykes** (staff 1982-2003) alone backed me to succeed. I don't know whether their opinions were founded on ignorance of the Catholic Church or knowledge of my character. At the time I imagined the former, now I realise it was probably the latter. However, looking back, it is clear to me that Rendcomb had been in fact a formative influence and very good experience for what was to come. A good school or institution forms not only the students but also the staff. Being a resident bachelor master was similar to university life and different. Different in that suddenly a life of relative ease had changed into one of hectic pace and numerous commitments. Similar in that carefree attitude that is the hallmark of relaxation after hard work. At the time I resented being saddled with all the jobs that come with being lowest of the totem pole and it seemed the last straw when **Kaye Knapp** (staff 1960-90) wanted me to drive the squash teams on Sundays. But his wise comment that youth does have to serve its time made me think. Moreover, being involved in everything did just that - get one



involved. Only those that have lived the life or one similar know just how involved one becomes during term time, and how the desire for end of term is stronger at times even than that of the pupils. However, the excitement and the expectation at the beginning of a term was always there. Life at Rendcomb was certainly never boring - at least not for long and it taught me the valuable lesson of commitment and the necessity of giving time for others even if it is answering the staff room door to find a string of boys changed in PE kit. Of course life was not always golden and it did have its hiccups, but at Rendcomb there was support. I had noticed from the beginning there was an important camaraderie amongst the staff, and also amongst the pupils, but most importantly also between the staff and the pupils - even if the experience of breakfast in the junior dining hall might convince one that survival of the fittest was taking the upper hand. Fellow members of staff were always willing to cover, stand in, or, in some of my cases cover up! The Rendcomb staff room was nearly always a happy place and with the rugby staff also a "happy hour". Likewise, even though at times dealing with students was a battle, I have seldom been in a place where when push came to shove, the students really pulled through. The degree of trust that could be placed in many was truly amazing and Rendcomb succeeded in the philosophy of giving responsibility to the students. But most importantly, it was a school where the more unusual kids could not only survive but also flourish and make an impact where in a larger school they would have been swallowed up. How often did the U15A and B rugby side play every student we had in the class. Where else could winter sailing take place or members of a fourth hockey eleven flourish? Rendcomb was therefore not only about treating each person as an individual and encouraging their talents, but also about the sense of community. This was clearly demonstrated in times of grief. Lastly, the hallmark of a school or similar institution is whether people there are happy. Many parents have remarked that they chose Rendcomb because what impressed them most on first sight was that the students were happy and at ease. As a member of staff I have to concur with this. I remember vividly coming for my interview and being invited in by **Mike Craddock** for a drink. As the evening progressed more staff dropped in until it was quite a party. Rendcomb was a friendly and happy place while although the important distinctions were kept, staff and students were at ease with each other. I have fond memories of the top floor parties that **Steve Lea** (staff 1988-97) and **Mike Craddock** hosted where staff, sixth form and ORs mixed. Often at the time one did not fully appreciate the unique experience that Rendcomb was.

-x-x-x-x-x-

Returning to England after a fairly long period abroad only confirms in my mind that the values that Rendcomb teaches are more than ever needed if the present tide of materialism and self-centredness (as Denis Price wrote, "it is the quality of one's own living that is important") is to be halted. I am grateful for the time I had at Rendcomb and to the staff and students that shared that time with me. Contrary to what people thought at the time in the Bathurst, what I did then and what I do now are very similar and many of you I remember in my work. They might even be amused to know that I still manage to have scrapes with authority! Should anyone wish to get in contact with me they can reach me by post at 23, Holmfield Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 1SE or by e-mail at dom@ssjohn.org.

Those that remember Tony Haselhurst, an Australian gap year student, might be interested to know that he was married in 2005 to a delightful girl, Claire.

### Irigithathi Primary

**Martin Griffiths** (staff 1982-2003) writes: I was delighted to hear from Jane (née Watson 1975-77) and Richard Gunner last year who passed on to me a cheque for over £400 for the Irigithathi Primary School. This was the last of the funds raised for this small Kenyan Primary School which Rendcomb had supported for many years through a vast array of fashion shows, dinners and parents' association events. The money will be



of great benefit to many African children and will assist the school with its educational work. My thanks again to all those ORs in particular who gave so much time and energy in helping with this project over the years. On a personal level I am still teaching at Gloucester College of Art and zooming around on my motor bike whenever possible.



Irigithathi Primary P.O. Box 14  
Naromoru 10105 23rd September 2005

Dear Martin

Hallo Sir, Thank you so much for your continued concern to our needy school we cannot forget what you did to our school and we hope you can visit us again. Welcome.

We have received the calendar and a cheque amounting to GBP 484.11. Thank you so much and God bless you and help you realise your dreams.

I am hoping to ensure that the money, with the help of other stakeholders, we shall put it into use. I shall communicate the details of our expenditure once we cash in and budgeted.

Yours sincerely

Mr Patrick Muriuki Gathara

### **Old Rendcombian News**

**Anthony Ashmore** (1971-77) has had an adventurous life. After marrying in 1980 he moved to the U.S.A. in 1982 with his wife and two sons. He returned to England in 1984 and then to Northern Ireland in 1985; he had two more sons and also two daughters who died in infancy. After his wife's death in 1998, he returned to England and married again in 2005! He hopes now to get in touch with old acquaintances.

**Christopher Terrill** (staff 1978-83) was the producer and photographer of the recent BBC series "Shopmates", the result of a year spent filming all aspects of the Royal Navy's work. This took an unexpectedly dramatic turn when HMS Chatham was sent to help with rescue work after the Asian tsunami. (He was not instantly recognisable from the photograph in the Radio Times! Ed). He also filmed "Charlotte Church – Confessions of a Teen Angel" for ITV2.

**Clair Watson** (1990-92) has spent the last ten years teaching reception children in British primary schools in Dubai. In September 2005 she left the "hustle and bustle" of Dubai's hectic city for a quieter life in Kenya, living on a small island with her fiancé. They will be running a dhow operation for a private family - lots of outdoor life, diving, camping, safaris and windsurfing. They will make regular trips to Mombassa for shopping, seeing her fiancé's parents and overseeing the building of their house in Watamu, 500m from the beach. Visitors will be very welcome when they have settled in!

**Neil Johnson** (1964-70) wrote last April. He lives in Norfolk where he is a consultant ophthalmic surgeon in King's Lynn, now working part-time. He says that he loves the surgery and feels that the difference a cataract operation makes to people is reward enough in itself. He performs quite a lot of squint surgery on children with whom he seems to get on well - he thinks this is because he has a similar mental age as the children!! He continues in his letter to Bill White:

"But I'm 52 now and I find it hard to believe that when I was at Rendcomb you were younger than I am now (quite true but many might not believe it! Ed.) I arrived at Rendcomb in 1964 - a rather sickly child as I remember after 3 months of poor health. It only took a term of lovely Gloucestershire air and days packed with activity to set me on my feet. My 2 eldest boys are now at Gresham School. This has a long association with Rendcomb as you know and is continuing with James Quick doing brilliantly well as head of the Prep School. It is only since my wife remarked how busy the boys always were that I remembered that the timetable at

Rendcomb was as full. And just as the boys take it in their stride, I too loved the busyness of the organised chaos. Are the bell timings the same? I can still remember every bell timing of every day. How sad is that! Apart from setting me up in my careers as an army officer and now as an eye surgeon, a further debt I have to Rendcomb is for instilling in me a love of music. In particular, I owe **John Willson** (staff 1967-88) a huge amount for this. I loved singing in the concerts he put on at the school and really looked forward to singing with the Choral Society in Cirencester, where you too were a member. I seem to remember that I went there with **Dick Millard** and **Kim Warren** (1964-70). We had a great time and were even allowed a hot dog from the van on the way back. Who said 'fast food' was a recent invention?

I can't remember exactly how it came about, but John Willson suggested that I might like to try the oboe when in 6B. Although I didn't get very far then it must have kindled something in me for I have now taken it up again. I can't be the only one to feel that I wish I had practised then as much as I do now, but of course there is only one 'right time' for everything. 'When the student is ready a teacher shall appear' seems to have happened frequently during my life. I am unlikely to become a Buddhist however. Recently, I played with the Norfolk Symphony Orchestra in a concert in the King's Lynn Corn Exchange. The main piece was Bruckner's 4th Symphony. I don't know if you are familiar with this, but it needs an augmented brass section - 6 horns, 3 trombones, 3 trumpets and a tuba - which sounds wonderful.

I think that I enjoy chamber music more to be honest, and as I could not find any small groups in the area I started a wind quintet last November. We meet in a colleague's house called Hironnelle House and hence with a rather pathetic leap of imagination call ourselves L'Hironnelle. I hope this is not too hard to swallow. (Many apologies to **David Sells** (staff 1955-83) for the appalling joke!) Our first public engagement is later on in the summer, playing whilst a finger buffet is in progress. Hopefully, the audience will be more interested in eating than listening to our duff notes, but I think it should be great fun."

**Henrietta Rothman** (1986-87) writes to say that she is living in a beautiful part of Haute-Savoie, just by Lake Annecy, with her four children who manage to swim in the lake from April to October. Her contemporaries (and other O.R.'s) would be most welcome and she would be interested in an exchange for her two eldest sons (Felix 14 and Tobias 12).

**Christopher Hart** (1970-77) has been running the Wimbledon Office of Knight Frank, estate agents, since 1997. He thoroughly enjoys the job and considers Knight Frank to be a marvellous firm. He has two sons and when he wrote, was about to play golf with **Tim Lausch** (1970-77) - a rare occurrence as Tim's life in Xerox is hectic.

**Roland Martin** (1982-89) is now on the staff at Eton, having started his teaching career at Newcastle-under-Lyme School. When he wrote last year, he was about to take on a boarding house.

**Alice Parshall** (1974-76) writes to say that they now live in the heart of Earls Court. They have four children, - John, Nicholas and Francesca who are at the Lycee Charles de Gaulle, and Agnes who gave them a start by arriving at 1kg 8 weeks early in January 05. **Jane Lyons** (1974-76) is godmother to Francesca. Alice continues to work full time as a consultant psychiatrist and clinical director in the West London Mental Health Trust. They spend as much time as possible in their farm in the Pyrenees. They keep in touch with Denis and Mary Price (1969-90) who are 30km away. Alice had to have a hip replacement in 2004 - the old one had crumbled away because of a long-standing minor dislocation that on a par, she says, with all doctors she had failed to notice she had. She adds: "The scar seems to be the must-have for ladies at the local aqua gym class. But they do not have a new baby too..."

**Stephen Lea** (staff 1989-97) is now director of music at Stover School in Devon.

**David Maberley** (1959-66) has recently moved to the U.S.A. to take up the Soest Chair of Horticultural Science in the University of Washington, Seattle. The post is combined with the directorship of the complex botanic gardens and other allied entities in the University - these include the Washington Park Arboretum, the Center for Urban Horticulture and the Miller horticultural library. He says that the post seems to dovetail well with his experience at Oxford, Leiden and as CEO of Greening Australia in Sydney. He also holds the tenured post of Professor of Economic Botany. He will continue to hold his Extraordinary Chair at the Nationaal Herbarium. Nederland in the University of Leiden, the Honorary Directorship of the Joseph Banks Archive Project in London, his position as an Honorary Research Associate at Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, current membership of the Council of the International Association for Plant Taxonomy (Vienna and various other committees).

**Richard Bendy** (1979-84) sent the following account of his varied career to Bill White last year:

"I have been meaning to write this letter for some years but always seem to get half way through it and never finish. However, having received the latest Old Rendcombian's magazine and finding myself on an aeroplane bound for Peru with some clients, I have a few hours to occupy, so with a small word-processor and a glass of red wine or two to hand, I have little excuse to procrastinate further.

I think the last time I saw you was at the O.R.s reunion in 1994 or 1995 and so you may (or may not!) be interested in learning what I've been up to since. As you may remember I joined Sainsbury's as a trainee manager after leaving Rendcomb and having become bored after two years of being a highly paid shelf

stacker, I made the natural progression to assisting in the production of corporate videos with Beverly Foote's mother.

Not being one of the world's natural film producers and also having an ability (which I'm sure you remember!) at telling my elders and betters what to do and how to do it, I was forced to put my feet on the bottom rungs of Mexican restaurant management. The Sombrero became somewhat ill-fitting after a few months and having by now set the pattern for illogical changes of career I joined the magazine industry, in which after seven years I was a circulation manager of Newsweek magazine for the Middle East and Africa, and where my love of travel was probably awakened. However that is jumping ahead of myself.

Continuing the pattern set seven years earlier, I then decided to qualify as a financial adviser with the ill fated Equitable Life, which after two years worked out that with 14 of the 18 of us in the society doing my particular job off work due to serious stress, there may be something wrong with the job. They therefore changed our roles and in so doing offered us voluntary redundancy, which I took with alacrity.

And so it was in January 1997, with the luxury of some money in the bank and a chance meeting with old friends, I set up an adventure travel company, initially running tours to Ethiopia and Eritrea. It's been great fun, taken me to amazing places all over the world where I've met some wonderful people and started some small but sustainable charity projects. It's allowed me to fill an (as yet unpublished!) book with experiences ... and also left me, bizarrely, with a share in a London decorating company which I started in order to keep cashflow going when in 1998 tours in Ethiopia and Eritrea weren't going too well ... due to the small matter of a little war between them!

Being away all the time isn't very good for maintaining long-term relationships; so last August I sat under one of the ancient gnarled olive trees on my hillside in Sicily, which I seem to have picked up along the way, and, with the help of its age and experience, it helped me work out over the course of a few days what I wanted to do next. The travel industry is great but in the end in my opinion doesn't really achieve very much except deplete the ozone layer and so, wanting to be more UK based, I resolved to try and find something both interesting and maybe even good for the planet.

So sitting on an island where sun and wind are quite common and are increasingly harnessed, I came up with the idea of getting into the field of renewable energy. Having done my research and, for reasons too lengthy to go into, this has entailed qualifying as an electrician which in itself has been very enjoyable... It's amazing how one's O level physics knowledge comes blinking in the light from its hiding place, having thought it would never be of any use ever again. As part of the renewable energy business I have found myself also being led into the nascent home automation and lighting design business which is proving highly interesting... and so here you find me, at the dawn of yet another career!

The hillside in Sicily is just outside Noto, near Siracusa on the South East coast, and, as I'm sure you are aware, that beautiful island is absolutely brimming with Greek and Roman relics. It really is like living in a museum. In excavating a cave on my land we found what has been identified as a Roman furnace and in excavating the land further found an underground pyramid-shaped Greek cistern. This had been filled in at some point with lots of ancient detritus including bits of columns, broken Roman vases, coins etc. ... truly amazing when you think of the last time human eyes probably set eyes upon them.

When in Siracusa, I can't help remembering the ancient history gained from your Latin lessons, not only of Archimedes, but also when setting having an early morning coffee looking at the Fontana Aretusa; the spring which Artemis is supposed to have transformed Aretusa into, in an attempt to protect her from the river-god Alpheus.

That therefore, is my story so far and its conclusion neatly coincides with our impending arrival in Lima, which is to be followed by 10 gruelling days coaxing 50 charity trekkers to the pinnacle of the Inca Empire, Machu Picchu, ... luckily for the last time!

I hope all is well with you and that retirement is treating you well, it really would be good to see you again. Unfortunately I will be unable to make Old Rendcombians this year, due to my attendance at a wedding, however I hope to make it next year as I now have little excuse living as close as I now do. In the meantime, if you see an aeroplane flying low and slowly along the Churn valley, it is quite likely to be me as I'm still lucky enough to indulge my passion for aeroplanes regularly and which so far (touch wood!) has had less disastrous results than my forays into the world of aviation conducted at Rendcomb!"

**Stuart Shellswell** (1958-66) shows in this letter that the passing years have not affected his wit, his memory of Latin or his appreciation of Rendcomb! I wonder if the recent series about "Rome" (and Vercingetorix) has reached him yet!

"And Caesar looked down, and he was displeased with what he saw. 'Shellswellius', he said in a loud, rumbling voice. (*Actually, he calls all his friends in this very familiar manner, did you know?*) 'Tempura quid faciunt. Get off thy backside, and write a letter to WJDW, thy former Latin teacher.' (*At this point, I had better explain that Caesar has been studying American English since he was 'sent upstairs' on March 15, 44 B.C. - after all, he's had plenty of time on his hands. He now talks in this rather quaint fashion, although he does lapse into Latin every now and again.*) Caesar continued. 'WJDW has had little to do for a long time (apart

from organizing and contributing to the newsletter for the Old Rendcombian Society, and the odd bit of gardening and rambling), and he requires intellectual stimulation. I did suggest he read my *Commentarii de bello Gallico*, but he was not having any of *that*. He muttered something about having spent too long trying to get 5th formers to learn it for the GCE “O” levels, and all he got for his pains were drawings of fortifications on the blackboard! Quousque tandem abutere, Shellswellius, patientia nostra? Non scholae sed viae discimus. You’ve had some time off to put your house in order (*I think that he meant ‘move house’, but he does go overboard and get a little literal at times*), but enough is enough, and it’s time to get the fingers tapping away on the keyboard. Rem tene, verba sequentur. Nuda veritas. And don’t worry about making mistakes; laudant illa, sed ista legunt. So, go to it, buddy! Verba volan, littera scripta manet.”

...*Dimidium facti qui coepit habet*.....

Dear Bill, Well, what can I say? The command has come down, and I’d rather not annoy Him in case I catch His attention and He “calls me home for an early tea” (as they say). I actually think that He tends to overuse Latin maxims, but that’s purely my personal opinion. So, here we go - “invita Minerva, ut aiunt”, as Caesar might say.

I must apologise first for typing this letter rather than reintroducing my fountain pen to the outside world. However, my handwriting has never really recovered from criticism received from a history teacher at Rendcomb (I believe called “Williams”?), so it’s probably better all round if we let sleeping dogs lie and I use modern technology. And secondly, I’m sure that there will be more than the single occurrence of “American” spelling, but you’re probably pretty used to that by now. The beauty of it all is that my present employment is based extensively on my ability to use the English language, which is quite extraordinary considering the prowess (as such) I exhibited in this while at Rendcomb! Perhaps I’m a late developer!

It has been a long time since we last met or communicated. I believe the last time I visited Rendcomb was shortly after the end of the term that Colin Burden retired. I entered the woodwork room (there were bushes on the side of the “back drive” in that location when I was at Rendcomb!) to be greeted by the sight of Colin completing his departures. He gazed at me over the top of his spectacles, and when I asked him if he had any idea who was talking to him, he pondered for a few seconds and then replied “Yes, Stuart Shellswell!” I was very surprised that he remembered me, but perhaps it was notoriety rather than anything else. We had a long and interesting discussion; when I had to leave, he presented me with an old wooden block plane, which I still have in my garage at home. I was extremely impressed with the hockey pitches in Kennel Bottom near the stables, and all the other “improvements” that have been made since I left Rendcomb for the big wide world, but I guess that was almost 40 years ago (I left in 1966). One would expect some things to change in that time! And what of me in those 40 years? You may remember that I went to Sussex University, where I obtained a 1st class honours in automatic control in 1969 (and no, I did not have anything to do with throwing red paint over the American ambassador when he came to lecture at the university). I then went on to Cambridge to do research in control engineering, where I obtained an MSc in 1972. (I’m sure I don’t have to remind you that my Sussex degree is on the honours board at Rendcomb - albeit my name without the customary four l’s - but the Cambridge degree never did make it.) Following Cambridge, I joined a small company in Cambridge developing software for computer aided design (CAD), where I remained for 11 years, rising “through the ranks” from a lowly programmer to managing all world-wide installations (I think my title was the “customer installation manager”, no less!) Along the way I married a girl I had met at Sussex University, and had twin girls and a boy. In 1983 I joined another (competitive) Cambridge CAD company as a software director, and following the break-up of my marriage in 1987, I transferred to the Boston area here in the U.S.A. to run the operations side of their U.S. subsidiary (on my 40th birthday!). Computervision, a large US CAD company acquired the Cambridge company in 1982, and shortly after I moved to the U.S.A., Prime Computer acquired Computervision. While the division I was working in was self-sufficient and profitable, consolidation reared its ugly head, and at the end of 1988 our little organisation was shut down and I found myself out on the street. I joined a company specialising in document management as a product manager for a year, then moved to marketing in a Cambridge (Massachusetts) firm developing knowledge-based engineering software (or “smart” CADs), where I was very happy and stayed for 5 years, becoming director of marketing and then director of operations. But tough times were ahead for high-technology companies, and in the next three years I held a variety of product management and marketing positions at several companies, before joining a financial company (large bank) as an independent contractor specialising as a year 2000 consultant. This was very successful for several years, and I worked at Gillette and John Hancock, but that phase came to an end in 2000, when I joined a consulting company in Cambridge (Massachusetts) that used control engineering theory to help business decision-making. Finally my university education was becoming relevant! But that company was taken over by a London based consulting organisation that had no need for such high-technology “magic”, so I “jumped ship” in 2001 to EMC, where I’ve remained ever since. EMC is a worldwide leader in computer disk drives and is a multi-national; multibillion dollar company with headquarters about 15 miles from where I live. I spend my days researching and analysing data, and crafting documents, presentations, and spreadsheets for senior executives, and as the only English-educated person in a group of approximately 120 software

engineers, my word has become law in matters of usage of the English language. You can fool all the people all of the time! If only Kate James (staff 1932-69) could see me now!

Outside of work, I remarried in 1988, but that did not last too long, and for the last 10 years I have lived with a lady who is a senior vice-president at Morgan Stanley, one of the leading US financial and brokerage firms. We have a nice house in the western suburbs of Boston (about 20 miles from the centre of Boston), and we both “reverse commute” to work, so life is not too hectic. Over the years I have been able to indulge in my passion for cars (kindled by the motor club at Rendcomb!), and I now possess three English sports cars, two of which I am restoring (and have been for many, many years, but the less said about that the better!). As they are English cars, I also have two Japanese vehicles for my day-to-day travels! My children all live and work in the U.K. and all did well at school and university. Nicola went to Norwich School of Art and Design, and is now a business manager at a leading design and consulting company in London. Catharine read environmental studies at Aberystwyth before going on to Leeds University for her masters, and she now works for an environmental agency in Oxford. Graham studied manufacturing design and automation at Warwick University and is now employed as a CAD designer for a manufacturer of high-pressure vessels in Milton Keynes. My brother and his wife live near the coast in South Wales, just south of Aberystwyth, and my mother moved to Camarthen in 2001 after my father died. Everybody is healthy, but I regret that I find it difficult to visit my family and English friends more than once a year due to the somewhat limited vacation allowance that U.S. firms permit. I do manage to keep up some sporting activities, playing squash (which I started when I was studying at Cambridge) three times a week, so I seem to be successful in keeping “older age” somewhat at bay. I’ve also been on several walking tours in northern Italy, which have been very enjoyable. Three years ago I “did” the Italian lakes, and two years ago I hiked the “five towns”, managing to walk all of them in the one day in the middle of violent thunderstorms!

I wonder, do you still don your hiking boots? I also play the odd round of golf, and occasionally twirl a tennis racquet, but field hockey (as they call it over here) is a thing of the past. But I still have my Rendcomb rugby/hockey socks, although I fear I’m fighting a rearguard action against the moths!

I confess I have not managed to keep up with any ex-Rendcombians, with the possible exception of **Peter Trier**, who lives in the St. David’s area (or who did, back when I contacted him a few years ago). I do visit the Old Rendcombian web site quite regularly, but apart from engaging in a spirited discussion about the origin and date of a picture taken outside the old history room (when **Lawrence Wragg** (1956-63) confirmed my hypothesis); I find my generation sadly “missing in action”. Peter did tell me about **Geoff Smith’s** (1960-67) wedding anniversary, but that is unfortunately the sum total of my information on my colleagues. **Colin Burden** (staff 1966-97) did update me on the members of staff I knew, and I must say you are looking extremely well and fit in the pictures on the Old Rendcombian web site. I am glad to see that your exposure to drawings of Vercingetorix’s fortifications on the blackboard of the Latin room did not cause you undue or any long-term suffering! I think that I’ll finish off now and get this into the post. What I’ve written is mostly a lot of drivel, but I’m on orders “from above”, so it had to be done! Nobody said that it had to be interesting ...” And Caesar looked down, and muttered, “Well... ut desint vires, tamen est laudanda voluntas.” *Feeling bold I replied, “Potius sero quam numquam.”*

“Iniura non excusat iniuram”, he countered...

Finis coronat opus

**Hamish Wilson** (1971-78) is now the head of drama at St.Christopher’s School, Letchworth. He says it is a little like Rendcomb - it has pupil self-government, is small, has an informal atmosphere, no uniform and a vegetarian diet. He is very happy there.

**Eric Blencowe** (1976-83) reports that his new job, with responsibilities for zoos and international species conservation, has taken him to Hobart (albatross and petrel agreement), Kinshasa (great apes), Dakar (migratory waterbirds), and Nairobi (migratory species). He found himself heading U.K. delegations, guiding U.K. ministers and chairing “seemingly endless” E.U. co-ordination meetings during conferences round the world. He found chairing multilingual forums (UN language!) challenging, amusing and ultimately very gratifying. He thinks that there must have been something about Rendcomb that gave him some latent confidence!

**Lawrence Wragg** (1956-63) is now chairman of the C.P.R.E. in the east of England, and is coming to the end of his 3 years as president of the London Mountaineering Club. He reports that **David** (1992-97) is well and is a senior consultant.

**Robert (Bert) Stroud** (1971-76) is now living permanently in northern Spain since returning from Japan about 10 years ago. His brother, **Peter** (1975-82), returned to England last year after teaching abroad in four different countries for about 18 years, the last 12 years in Japan.

**Chris Horton** (1967-73) writes to say that he is still engineering mobile phone systems with Motorola, with whom he has been for seven years, but is now based in Basingstoke rather than Swindon. He is living in “the leafy fringes of Winchester”. His four children are all enjoying their schools and all playing hockey. Chris

played veterans hockey at Winchester until recently, but has now decided to develop his umpiring seriously, and has been taking on increasingly challenging appointments from Hampshire Hockey Umpires Association. **David Toresen** (1964-71), who is a senior resuscitation officer at St. Mary's Hospital, was mentioned in a very moving article in the Observer in January. He was one of the many medical staff involved in saving the life of Danny Biddle, who took the full force of one of the terrorist's bombs on the Tube at Edgware Road last July. The occasion was a reunion of all the staff involved at which Danny Biddle was able to express his heartfelt thanks for all the expert help he received.

**Sam Gunner** (1996-2003) bumped into **Richard Law** (1995-2002) in the street when visiting Hong Kong last August.

### **Old Rendcombian Web Site Guest Book**

18/1/2005, Name: **Gareth Davies** (1985-92), Location: near Toulouse. Now in the countryside in the south of France, just outside of Toulouse where I have been for 3 years. Still playing professional rugby (after 9 years now the body is starting to rust), at the moment injured, but hope to be back in 2 weeks for the big game against Dax. Awaiting the arrival of our first baby, so busy getting the house ready. Good to read the news of the familiar names.

20/1/2005, Name: **Jim Graham** (1990-97), Location: Leicester (God knows why). Really good to see a bunch of names I recognise on here. As for me I am living in Leicester working for a defence company. Loving life! Still see Tabs, Donners, and BJ occasionally. Spoke to Anna Peters not too long ago. Cheers.

11/3/2005, Name **Pjetro Krespi** (1998-99) Location: Russia. Hi people! I see that you are still the same. So many years passed, I still remember you. Carry on people.

14/3/2005, Name: **Jeni Crook** (1994-97). Location: Wootton Bassett. Where are all my year? Nat Maylott, Chaz Cowper, Giles Drew? Perhaps I'll have to wait a few years before they appear here! I have a daughter called Lillian. Andy (my better half) and myself are in the process of buying a house in Yorkshire. Can't believe Becky Williams has had a baby! Wow! E-mail me if you remember me would love to hear from everyone. Sad to hear Mr White's retired, Rendcomb won't be the same without him.

15/3/2005, **Rose Kennaway** (aka Thrower)(1994-99). Location: Spain. Yeah I would like to say there is definitely a lack of people my age on the site. Where is everyone? Still out in Spain. Coming into the 3rd year. Have managed (finally) to get the idea of Spanish! Would just like to congratulate Jeni and Andy on their new baby Lilian! If anyone fancies a summer holiday in Spain they are more than welcome!

21/3/2005, Name: **Catherine Faircloth** (now Schallamach) (1984-86). Location: Hong Kong and Gloucestershire. I can't believe it is nearly 20 years since I left Rendcomb! However, I drive past it regularly in the summer when I'm over from Hong Kong, where I have been living with my husband, Adam, for over 9 years. Full time mother to Benedict 5 and Oliver 2 (and 2 cats and 2 dogs) and have no thoughts of returning to being a lawyer or doing legal recruitment. Having moved out to "the country", well, as much as you can in Hong Kong, we finally took the plunge and bought a house. We are completely gutting it but we should be able to spend a month or so in it before returning to Gloucestershire for the summer. I will be at our cottage, just a few miles from Rendcomb, for half July and all of August so if anyone fancies getting in touch please do so by e-mail. I will be in Ireland at the end of August for my brother's wedding, so will catch up with O.R.s of Matthew's era then.

3/4/2005, Name: **Becky Williams** Location: Swindon. Hiya congrats on your bab Jeni, well she has been a bundle of laughs never stops smiling got her christening on 01/05 about 50 coming so far – still living in Swindon might be moving to Cricklade soon though not done a lot, I've been playing the stay at home mum thing - quite fun, as soon as little madam goes to school/playgroup I'm gonna join the police force. PC Williams, good eh??

24/4/2005, Name: **David Henshaw** (1940-48), Location: Central London. Just made contact with Geoff Bye, who I have not heard of, in the intervening 56 years! Is there anyone else of my era out there? What have I been doing? Acting, dancing, teaching. My last full-time post was as head of the School of Dance at what is now Middlesex University. Since then I have been chief examiner for A level dance. Now I do some inspecting of dance schools and consulting on dance examinations, and I have time for frequent visits to the theatre.

25/4/2005, Name: **Roz Frazer-Holland** (1994-2001), Location: Cheltenham. Hey good to hear Becky and Jen are doing so well, congratulations to you both. I saw Rose and her other half James on their trip over to the UK a few weeks back and had a good catch up! Still in contact with a few people from Renditz, Toe Gilbert in particular and also Will Turville and a few others that are still in the area. As for me I moved back to Chelt last year having spent 2 years in Birmingham, just finishing off at uni now around coaching and instructing horse riding which takes up most of my time! Looking forward to getting uni over with now and going back to working with horses full time. Would be really good to hear from anyone from my era (that makes us all sound

very old!) and good luck to anyone just finishing off dissertations or with exams coming up. Hope you are all well! Roz x.

20/5/2005, Name: **Lucian Tarnowski** (1997-2000), Location: Stow-on-the-Wold. Hello, anyone remember me? Where is Waddy, Jon Pratt, Phil GJ, Nat Maylott?? Toodle pip.

7/6/2005, Name: **Martin Griffiths** (1969-76) Location: Manchester. Can't believe that it's now 29 years since I left Rendcomb. I came to Manchester to medical school in 1977 and have never left. I'm a GP in East Manchester, and live in Hyde, the town of mass murderers (Myra Hindley, Ian Brady, Fred Shipman). Been married for 20 years this month to Lesley, another GP and we have one son, Alex, who is 15. I have many fond memories of school, particularly the 6th form years when we were treated more or less as adults, and there was no doubt that the introduction of girls did a lot of good for our social skills. For those of you later alumni we were only the 3rd year to have a co-ed 6th form. Had some e-mail correspondence with Kevin Barraclough earlier this year who does the same as me, but came back to Gloucestershire to work.

18/6/2005, Name: **Geoff Bye** (1940-48) Location: Guilford, Connecticut, U.S.A. I have a website, geoffbye.com, where you can see my artwork and keep in touch. Visit me!

21/6/2005, Name: **Eric Collett** (1933-37) Location: Havelock North, New Zealand. Above dates do not go back that far! (fixed now, ed!) Have been involved in major telecom projects in UK, India, Nigeria, Jamaica, Norway, Australia and New Zealand. Rendcomb education developed the initiative to get out and do things. Anybody else now in New Zealand? Have passed by Rendcomb many times when back in UK, looked around, what a change since my days!

22/6/2005, Name: **Al Hedderwick** (1978-83) Location: North Brewham, Somerset. Hi, Not too many messages from contemporaries on here; two years to the day since I last wrote. Eventful two years – job took me to Iraq, which felt fairly hairy despite brevity of visit. Represented GB & NI at World Transplant Games - got injured/hospitalised but managed a bronze on last day. Also toured Australia with GB Transplant Cricket Club - The Transplant Australia Cricket Team are touring next year in the Bath area and the north east so organising that is my new task. Still a civil servant and should be starting a master's degree in defence acquisition shortly - much rather be doing ancient history but the taxpayer won't pay me to do that!

2/8/2005, Name: **Becky Williams** Location: Swindon. Hello everyone well just to update my little girl is now 13 months, she's walking about and soon we will be moving to Cricklade, about time. Me and Katie are going to see Rose out in Spain in September which I am looking forward to. I've started a sort of career in childminding. The boy I'm looking after at the moment is not as good as Katie was but he has his moments, me and Wayne are discussing having another baby sometime next year, oh yea, I entered Katie into a comp for the Evening Advertiser so if anyone gets that in September have a look out Katie Warren. She was accepted for 5 modelling agencies but they were all in London, bit far to travel every day and all the bombs and stuff going on, maybe I'll try again when that's all settled down. So what's everyone else up to? I know Alice is off travelling somewhere and Rose is in Spain, I've heard Freddy is doing well. Oh yea my sis passed her driving test yesterday I ADVISE ANYONE IN SWINDON WATCH OUT FOR BLUE NOVA! She's dangerous lol only joking anyway love to hear what everyone is up to xx

4/9/2005, Name: **Andrew Carter** (1972-79). Location: Newbury. Blimey! 26 years of intensive therapy fly out of the window with a single mouseclick! Doesn't time fly when you're getting old ... Apart from a near miss with Windy last year and a brief e-mail exchange with Craig, I have totally lost touch with Rendcomb, though I am thinking of sending my daughter next year. The place certainly seems to have prospered since I left. In one of the earlier messages someone was asking after Chris Brown (who is my nephew); he is currently living near Buxton and is getting married this month. For my own part, I won't bore you other than to mention that I currently rob banks for a living. I'm a single parent (no Batman costume though) and that if John Sinclair ever reads this, I'm sorry, ok? All the best Andrew, aka "Roo".

15/9/2005, Name: **Tony Neilson** (1990-92), Location: Swindon. Hi everybody who remembers me! Married for 11 years with 2 lovely girls now. Would like to hear from anyone who remembers me. My e-mail address is [tonyneilson@btinternet.com](mailto:tonyneilson@btinternet.com)

28/9/2005, Name: **Bettine Killmer** (Tines) (1996-96), Location: Germany. I don't know what the 6A class of my year, 1996, does and I'm missing every one of those, even now, so...Gills and Tabs and Nuts and Vicky and all of you..where are you? Xxx and hugs.

5/11/2005, Name: **Richard Parsons** (1986-91), Location: Cheltenham. Thank you to Georgina Harford of A level psychology for inviting me back this month to Rendcomb to talk about my practice and work in hypnotherapy and psychotherapy. It was an amazing experience revisiting the school; not much has changed, still familiar corridors and rooms. Thank you for the kind welcome and good luck to your students.

Cheltenham Hypnotherapy Clinic. [www.richardparsons.net](http://www.richardparsons.net)

9/11/2005, Name: **Christopher Thomas** (1998-02), Location: Oxford. Hey it's Marv here I'm at Uni at Oxford studying finance. Oh joys. Anyway I'm just opening my first restaurant in a couple of months so would be good to see all the guys again to come down on my opening night. I hope you are all cool, anyone know where fritz got to?

13/11/2005, Name: **Matt Collier** (1994-99), Location: Chicago, Illinois, USA. Wow...so many names I haven't seen in years. Just thought I should post a little note to say hello to those that I know. As for me... Finishing up my university courses in December and from there... who knows?

12/12/2005, Name: **Steve "Ron" Roney** (1990-95), Location: Grand Cayman. Still 'arrible! 21/12/2005, Name: **Tom Paton** (1974-81), Location: Fairford. It's 25 years next year, any appetite for a gathering?

5/1/2006, Name: **Richard Hayter** (1947-55), Location: Budleigh Salterton, Devon. Only just found this site and impressed. I helped Richard Sumsion (1947-54) make the London taxi for the seven dwarves in the Christmas 1953 photo. The photo was taken the day after the party and includes R. Sumsion, Tim Gay (1948-54), M Richards (1947-56), Hywell Richards, Alistair Wallace (1949-55). My memories of Rendcomb are all pretty positive.

8/1/2006, Name: **Treve Evans** (1971-78), Location: Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Have been back in Dubai now for nearly a year having spent five years in Cairo, which was great. Now in a job with extensive travel in a region that includes the Maldives. Went to three of the 2,000 islands on my first trip - only another 1,997 to go. On the flip side I also cover Nigeria; the best thing about Nigeria is the direct flight back to Dubai. Been out of the UK for the last 11.5 years and loving it. Did my 'O' levels 30 years ago in the hot, hot summer of '76. My daughter (we also have two sons 14 and 11) is doing her GCSEs this year. Bloody hell...! My brother, Richard (1971-75) is happily single and works doing something with computers and young ladies at a travel company in London. Not sure we'll ever know the truth...

### **At Rendcomb**

The following O.R.s have children at Rendcomb:-

Jane Gunner (née Watson) (1975-77), Charles Hutton-Potts (1976-83), Simon Hardie (1984-91), Adam (1980-82) & Jenny Phelps (née Watson) (1978-80), Mark Wilcox (1973-80), Lindsey North (staff 1996-), Alex & Amanda Brealy (1982-87, staff 1994-), Steve (1969-76) & Tessa Hicks (née Wolferstan), (1974-76), Anne Haas (staff 2001-), Charles Jefferson (staff 2001-), Gerry & Liese Holden (staff 1999-), Nicola Gill (staff 1994-), Martin & Lynne Watson (staff 2003-), Martin Graham (staff 1985-), Mike & Anne Slark (staff 1992-), James & Jane Stutchbury (staff 1993-), Phil Dunn (staff 1984-), Paul Jennings & Maureen Dancer (staff 2001-), Cath Forshaw (staff 2001-).

## O.R. Sport

Old Rendcombians Rugby 2005



Steve Jones' Yellow Team

Shirts:	Steve Jones' Yellow	Cirencester RFC Black
Coach:	Tommy Lait (in absentia)	Mr M Hastings
Position		
1	Rob Hart	James Brittain-Jones
2	Simon Barrett	Hugh Marsden*
3	Pete Croft	Alex Brealy
4	Nat Maylott	Richard Wills*
5	Pat Morgan	Matt Harbottle
6	Charles Hutton-Potts	Phil Webb
7		Gareth Williams*
8	Freddie Lait	Nick Evans
9	Charles Yardley	Dirmuid Brennan *
10	Pat Boydell	Matt Hutchins
11	Ian Thompson	Matt Faircloth
12	Steve Jones ©	Ali Harris
13	John Morgan	Ben Maslen ©
14	Steve Croft	Greg Jones
15	Ralph Aspin	

\* = guest/ringer

Society referee: Mr David Bridges

Final Score: 19-31 to Ben Maslen's side

A large and vocal crowd witnessed a match played in the usual friendly but competitive spirit. There were some high quality moments, mostly involving a rather rapid Ralph Aspin. Everyone showed they hadn't 'lost it' quite yet! Thanks must go to Steve Jones for helping to 'mobilise' people into donning their kit (as well as providing a team kit!), Cirencester RFC for the use of a strip and David Bridges for refereeing once again.

A.S.B.



Cirencester RFC  
black team

OR Hockey 18th March 2006



2nd XI with Chris Horton (right)

Mens 1st XI

14:45

Astro

Umps: ASB & Chris Horton

Dave Roper

Steve Jones (GK)

Tristan Sharman

Paul Bongiovanni

Ian Thompson

Charles Hutton-Potts

Dave Ashby

Duncan Bond

Phil Moore

Pat Morgan

Matt Harbottle

John Morgan ©

James Groombridge

Pat Boydell

Jo von Rotenhan

Richard Demczak

Mens 2nd XI

13:30

Astro

Umps: JHS & Chris Horton

Ian Thompson

Charles Hutton-Potts ©

Chris Jarrett

Duncan Bond

Andy Platt

Will Brittain-Jones

Armen Topalian

Pete Croft

Pat Boydell

Pat Morgan

Simon Barrett (GK)

Matt Williams

Laurie Barton

Charles Yardley

LOST 2-3

Ladies XI

12:15

Astro

Umps: CJW & Chris Horton

Alice Barefoot

Jess Weston ©

Becca Demczak

Sarah Colson

Harri Kingsford

Heather Roper

Jenny Phelps

Richard Demczak

Tasha Heffron (GK)

Rudi McKay

Sam Kolb

LOST 1-3

Guests for College team

Geoff Hulbert

Ralph Aspin

Tommy Lait

Matt Hutchins

WON 3-2



1st XI



Ladies XI

### **David Essenhigh**

Given the guiding influence of Davey on my collegiate sporting career, it is a small miracle that I have not ended up with a lifelong eating disorder. If you happen to have a collection of Wisden Cricketers Almanacks, I would refer you to the 1988 125th edition, edited by Graeme Wright, page 894. The boldface refers to Rendcomb College with a record of played 13: Won 7 Lost 0 Drawn 6. The cricket professional, defined in the broadest sense, is listed as D Essenhigh.

I like to think that the motivation and passion in captaining that side came in Davey banning me from eating puddings from the 15th January 1987 until the start of the season. The fact that he announced this to the whole dining room was almost Woodward-esque, at a time when Sir Clive still had a full barnet and was learning his trade with the Manley Recreational XV. The efficacy of this weight-loss programme was doubtful. In attempting a catch at second slip that summer, I landed on my stomach, bounced and was awarded that evening with a t-shirt with 'Walrus' emblazoned on it. No prisoners in the Essenhigh school of sports psychology. Perhaps this rugged approach to the game was necessitated by the unique politics of cricket at Rendcomb which, for a time, was matched only by Yorkshire County Cricket Club. During his tenure we witnessed the first cricket tour overseas to Jersey, which in the heyday of Bergerac, was a venue of some considerable glamour.

I always remember the game being played with the right attitude and whilst Davey's pitches weren't calypso in bounce, they were true. Perhaps being a statuesque 4ft. 6in. Davey thought they were quite lively enough. I have many happy memories of cricket at Rendcomb and Davey was a huge reason for that being the case. The Essenhigh fizzing wrong-un accompanied by the Wiltshire Wizard cry of "You can't hit me, Whittaker", was a staple of preseason nets. Invariably he was right. I couldn't.

Good luck to team Essenhigh, smiles and laughter will follow them and as I sit here chewing an Atkins Bar I'd like to think that I survived mentally unscathed being denied arctic roll.

Ian Whittaker (1980-87)

### **85th College Anniversary - 2nd July 2005**

Compared with the 75th Anniversary celebrations and the ball in 2000, this was (intentionally) a modest event, but it proved highly successful.

The customary O.R. cricket match did not materialise due to lack of support but O.R.s were able to watch a school match instead. A reunion (30 years on) had been organised for those who left in 1975 - thanks to the tireless efforts of **Des Knox** (1970-75). Many of this group had not been round the college for many years and the afternoon tours provided hilarious reminiscences!!

After the A.G.M., O.R.s and wives enjoyed a leisurely and excellent buffet supper. It proved to be a most delightful evening in the attractive surroundings of the reading room, begun by an apposite (and witty!) Grace read by the Headmaster. A presentation was made to David Essenhigh.

Those who attended the buffet were:

Tim (1969-76) and Fiona Nicholas  
Robert (1969-76) and Carrie Barrett  
Chris (1965-71, staff 1976-) and Penny Wood  
David (1966-71) and Sheila Williams

Richard and Jane (1975-77) Gunner  
Neil Lumby (1968-73)  
Mr and Mrs David Vaisey (1948-54)  
Mr and Mrs A Margetts (1935-43)



The headmaster and Mrs Holden  
Mrs H Thornton (née Lee-Browne)  
Mr and Mrs Roy Dennis (staff 1959-82)  
Mr and Mrs John Williams (staff 1988-)  
Bill White (Staff 1961-97)  
Steve (1969-76) and Tessa (1974-76) Hicks  
Mr and Mrs Ian Read (1969-76)  
Julian (1965-71) and Eva Gray  
Dr and Mrs Philip Smith (1968-74)

David Henshaw (1940-49)  
Mr and Mrs M. Lee-Browne  
Mr and Mrs Julian Comrie (1946-54)  
Colin Hitchcock (1971-78)  
Michael (1943-50) and Margaret Miles  
Mr and Mrs Michael Edwards (1948-54)  
Mr and Mrs David Essenhigh (staff 68-05)  
Mr and Mrs Colin Burden (staff 1963-97)

And the musicians: Andrew Gunning (staff 2004-), Laura Holmes, Peter Liang, Rupert Uzzell, Graham Hulbert, supported by Luke Gunner who painted all the windows on the cake.



85th Anniversary cake made by Jane Gunner and cut by Hermione Thornton (née Lee-Browne) and Martin Lee-Browne. Chairman Neil Lumby supervised!



### **Class of '75, Thirty Year Reunion**

**Des Knox** (1970-75) writes:

**Pete Lace** (1970-75) and I turned up to the school in the early afternoon to be welcomed by **Neil Lumby** (1968-73) in Saul's Hall. Three others of our lot had already arrived - **Jon Dixon** (1968-75), **Stuart Honeyball** (who'd cycled all the way from Bristol) and **Simon Wormleighton** (1968-75). Simon told us that he'd recently been appointed headmaster of Plymouth College and would therefore soon be boss to **Paul Rose** (1968-75) who teaches there. (Paul couldn't come; but sent his regards.)

Next to arrive were **Phil** (1968-74) and **Ann Smith**. Technically Phil was in the form above us but only because he was a swot and jumped a year - he has been designated an honorary classmate.

Most of us opted for the tour of the school, helpfully guided by **Jane Gunner** (1975-77). The changes to the buildings over the last thirty years have been extreme in places, so the guide was a necessity. I was surprised to find the study-bedrooms on the 'lower deck' had disappeared to be replaced by classrooms: the experience was

a strange mixture of the familiar and unfamiliar.

We were then joined by **Suzanne Marston** (1973-75) and **Bella Burke** (née Bartlett, 1973-75) who had travelled up together from Dorset. Bella had phoned the night before to say they were coming which was a pleasant surprise, as some of us had not seen them since we left. We then made our way 'up top' for the free food. We found **Colin Burden** (staff 1966-97) there, who seemed to recognise most of us. **Rob** (1968-75) and **Kari Weston** eventually found us and joined the throng, and we spent the rest of the afternoon reminiscing and discussing absent friends: Rob and Jon particularly entertained us with some long-forgotten (and probably best-forgotten) stories of our early years at Rendcomb.

All in all we had a pretty good day and we decided we should do the same again in five years time. It would have been nice to see more of the class, but then it was organised at short notice and we were competing against Wimbledon and Bob Geldorf. Those who have been in touch but were unable to attend are **Nigel Bradbury** (1969-75), **Paul Rose** (1968-75), **Pete** and **Jacqui Sayers**, **Charlotte Kirby** (née Brain 1973-75), **Jacki Holmes** (née Wilson 1974-76), **Cat Ledger** (1973-75), **Mike James** (1968-75), **Bruce Pritchett** (1968-75), **Stephen Bolt** (1968-75), **Steve Pendell** (1968-75), **Sally Patterson** (née Blyth 1973-75), and **Clive Mathias** (1968-75).

### News of 1975 Leavers

**Stuart Honeyball** has given up his computer business and now lives in Yate, where he looks after his elderly parents. He has recently been in touch with **Nigel Bradbury** who lives in Oxford.

**Mike James** is a financial adviser and is married with two daughters.

**Peter Lace** works as a stockbroker in London and is married with three children.

**Charlotte Kirby** is married and living in Scotland. She is currently doing voluntary work for the Citizens' Advice Bureau and Macmillan Cancer.

**Jacki Holmes** lives in Newcastle and writes: "In 1985 I packed in my job, started up an interior design business, got married to my then long term boyfriend (and still husband), Alan, and moved house. In 1989 Alan and I started up our strategic market research consultancy, Wood Holmes Group, which is still going strong and keeps us both very busy. In 1991 I gave birth to our daughter, Lauren, who is a truly lovely girl and nothing like me. In 1993 we moved to our current home and this year my younger brother **David** (who went to Rendcomb 1980-85) finally got married to a lovely Polish girl so we had a fantastic time at their Polish wedding."

**Stephen Bolt** (Dr) lives in Bury St Edmunds, has been married for twenty-three years and has three children. He recently moved from Anglian Water, after thirteen years, to become a business manager in ADAS (the agricultural consultancy) as head of integrated water management, and is soon to become head of integrated water and soil management with a team of roughly eighty-five.

**Bruce Pritchett** has his own accountancy firm in Cheltenham and is married with three children.

### College News

Unusually no academic staff left the school in 2005 but we were sad to say goodbye to **Julia Morris** and **Richard Lester** after many years of musical association with the school. A new head of ICT, **Charles Brierly-Howes**, started in September and his wife **Siobhan** carried out duties in the boarding houses. ICT is now offered up to AS level and the main computer suite has been upgraded. It is hoped that an intranet will be in place by the end of the academic year.

The number of pupils in the senior school is the largest ever at 276 and there are still three third forms.

The art department has undergone considerable change and ORs will be impressed by the fresh appearance of the ground floor of the Art Block. **Ralph Mann** left at Christmas, having decided that secondary teaching was not for him. He had contributed widely to the life of the school. **Sophie Blackwell** is now assisted by **Alison Mosey**, **Corinne Hockley** and **Tom Denny**! The geography classroom in the stable block has also been refurbished. **Nicky Houghton** who began as our SEN co-ordinator is now teaching Spanish to the third year and this will be offered at GCSE in 2008.

The staff are justifiably proud of the GCSE and A level results of 2005 (100% A level pass rate with 78% A and B grades and 92% GCSE pass rate with 46% A\* and A grades) and other statistics indicate that Rendcomb offers significant added value.

Sport is still an important part of a Rendcomb pupil's life and the teams have been competing well. The girls enjoy lacrosse and they are beginning to make their mark on the circuit. We have just said goodbye to **Sarah Royer**, an American student who has helped with sport, particularly with lacrosse, the Duke of Edinburgh Award and who visited our sister school in Uganda. The Duke of Edinburgh Award is offered at gold level to the lower sixth and it is still well supported. **David** and **Judy White** joined the staff at Cwm Du in October

during the assessment expedition in the Black Mountains.

Music continues to be strong and choirs are proving more popular. A successful concert in Cirencester Parish church included Rutter's *Requiem*, Handel's *Zadock the Priest* and Parry's *I was Glad*. If any ORs are interested in singing or playing at future events please contact Andrew Gunning, the director of music, via: [music@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:music@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk). The end of term carol service is still held in Cirencester parish church on the last day of the Michaelmas term and O.R.s are welcome to attend. It would be helpful if they could let the school know in advance (01285 832300). Drama is equally alive and is taken all the way through to A level. The big production this academic year was *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which was a grand moving event, and the lower school will perform *Return to the Forbidden Planet* in the summer term.

The junior school goes from strength to strength under the leadership of Martin Watson and their big production was *Wind in the Willows*. This involved many costumes, which were expertly done by Julie Pritchard, who is still sister, along with Judy Hunt.

Look out for other information on [www.rendcombcollege.co.uk](http://www.rendcombcollege.co.uk).

*Chris Wood (1965-71, staff 1976-)*

### Late News

**Nicola Gill** (staff 1994-2006) is leaving in July. She took over from Chris King as head of geography and has been involved in many aspects of college life, including running a girls' boarding house. She is going to Westonbirt as head of geography, which is a part-time post. Please send tributes so that they can be published in the next newsletter.

**Claire Gallon** who teaches English part-time, is leaving to train as a special educational needs assessor.

### John Williams

John Williams joined the staff to teach mathematics in 1988. A keen sportsman, he was soon involved in



coaching various sports. He was appointed head of mathematics when **Paul Sykes** (1982-2003) became director of studies. Together with his wife, Sandra, he took over Stable House from **Chris and Liz King** in 1994. In an unassuming but efficient way John has given valuable service to Rendcomb over the past sixteen years and both he and Sandra will be greatly missed. He and Sandra will be moving to their home in Spain in September, all O.R.s of their time will want to wish them many happy years of retirement.

The following tributes give some illustration of the affection and respect in which John and Sandra were held. From **Paul Sykes** (staff 1983-2004)

From the day that John and his family moved into the Stable Block flat it was obvious that they belonged at Rendcomb. He arrived as an experienced mathematician and talented sportsman, immediately fitting into the college way of life, and his dedication and professionalism have seen him progress from assistant mathematician to head of department to senior housemaster whilst always being highly respected in the common room.

Within the maths department John was a joy to work with. Always conscientious, a team player, and if a job needed doing he would roll up his sleeves and get on with it. Between lessons there would often be a chat - berating the exam boards or generally putting the world to right, or indeed applauding his beloved Manchester

United. By working together for a number of years we obviously saw changes in the way that mathematics was delivered, such as modularity at 'A' level or coursework at GCSE. I mention the latter because it highlights a couple of John's qualities that all the staff at Rendcomb have come to appreciate. His attention to detail and paperwork are an example to all, and before long John relieved me of the enormous amount of recording that was necessary within the department. I'm still not sure how this came about - I think John realised my limitations in this area and quite rightly decided his filing would be far better and the transition just evolved!! This quiet, assume manner was so reassuring. From the pupil's perspective, he showed infinite patience, gave much encouragement, and would give them as much time as they needed both in and out of the classroom. When John took over as head of department (officially!) the department was indeed in safe hands and the examination results reflect what a good job he has done. As in any boarding community, there is much to college life outside the classroom. John has played his part with, for example, a huge contribution to games, particularly rugby and cricket. It is on the pastoral side of the school however where his qualities have been utilised to the full. For a number of years he was the assistant housemaster of Stable House before taking over the reins himself. His first love of life is his family, and with Sandra and the boys John was the perfect role model for all the pupils that passed through his house. The highest accolade I can give him as a housemaster is that I was a parent of a pupil at the school, and was very pleased and reassured to have the Williamses *in loco parentis*.

John has many sterling qualities that over the years he has brought to his work at Rendcomb, and which are difficult to do justice in a few words. I will remember the professionalism and sense of loyalty; I will remember the dry sense of humour and the fact that he didn't suffer fools gladly. Most of all I will remember John as a friend and colleague.

Many old Rendcombians have much to thank him for and I'm sure that they will wish to join me in wishing John a long and happy retirement.

From **Charles Webb** (1990-97)

John Williams took over from **Chris King** as housemaster of Stable when I was in the fifth form. He brought with him a calm and measured approach to the job of housemaster. Mr Williams quickly settled into the role and football-related jokes became a regular feature of the evening callover. It must have been a sore point for the fervent Man. Utd. supporter that his early years in charge coincided with an influx of Arsenal fans to Stable's junior ranks. I always thought Stable must have been one of the harder houses to look after. Some quite unusual individuals seemed to end up there. Mr Williams treated all pupils with great respect. When his attempts to ensure a modicum of discipline and decorum were inevitably thwarted by a recalcitrant fourth or indeed sixth former, his catchphrase of "get organised" and a sigh of frustration would ring out through the house.

His run-ins with the sixth form inevitably focused on the Saturday night bar and its aftermath. We figured - not unreasonably - that because Stable was so very far from the venue (the Green Room, beneath the Dulverton Hall), it explained why it often took so long for us to arrive back after closing time. This didn't always wash with Mr Williams, particularly as occasionally we seemed a bit wobbly when we did finally make it back to the front door to find a tired Mr Williams waiting to lock up and go to bed.

Mr Williams was ably supported in his role as housemaster by his wife Sandra. She is a fantastic lady and her help in instructing the reluctant lower sixth how to make a washing machine work was vital when the time came for us to do our own laundry.

I have to say my own experience of being taught by both Mr and Mrs Williams met with limited success. My attempt at doing A-level maths lasted all of a double period with Mr Williams when it quickly became apparent I had not been blessed with a head for figures. And, despite Mrs Williams's careful tuition, I still haven't worked out how to iron a shirt properly 10 years after she first tried to teach me! However, it should be pointed out that both of these failures say more about my inadequacies than the undoubted patience and abilities of either of the Williamses.

I and my peers who went through Stable remember the time extremely fondly, and much of the reason for that was the way the house was run by Mr Williams. I am particularly grateful for the confidence he showed in me when he asked me to become head of house. I wish him and his family every happiness in the future.

Charles Webb (1990-97) worked for a time as a journalist in Cheltenham and is now studying Arabic at the School of Oriental and African Studies.

From **Sam Gunner** (1996-2003)

John Williams taught me maths for my entire time at Rendcomb, and it will be a great shame to think that future pupils will not get the same expert tuition as I did, done with the same passion for the subject. Having said that, he never did seem that keen on the statistics, but he taught it admirably nevertheless. During 6th form, when only the cream of the maths crop was left, he would often enjoy a good conversation over an

equation or two. His friendly and easy-going attitude to learning made him a pleasure to talk to and gave a very friendly and relaxed ambience to the maths classroom.

He was also famous for his love of almost all sports, and was patient enough to take football with the under 15s. This was always done with a wonderfully light heart, making it really enjoyable, even on days when the weather conditions were not conducive to happy 12year-olds. He would always rally our spirits and make sure we got as much exercise as we could and enjoyed ourselves as much as possible. He was also the perfect cricket coach, always expecting just the right amount from the pupil, but more importantly making sure that everyone enjoyed running around in the sun.

Another of Mr Williams' many hats was of course long time head of Stable House. Mr and Mrs Williams were both much loved as housemasters, and John managed to keep the same relaxed attitude in their hall as he did in the maths and sports. This gave the house a wonderful family spirit and it was a lovely place to spend a few hours during lunch and later in the evenings.

Both John and Sandra are great losses not just to the maths department and the sports pitch but also to the school as a whole, and it will have trouble coping without the fantastic down-to-earth attitude that the Williamses provided. I myself and everyone else that he has taught wish him the best with whatever he chooses to do.

Sam Gunner is reading electronic engineering at Nottingham University. (He got grade A in mathematics and in further mathematics at A level).

### **Destination of Recent Leavers**

Hannah Bishop	University of West of England, Bristol	Forensic science
Charlotte Cumberpatch	Harper Adams University College	Rural land management
Christine Dai	St Edmund Hall, Oxford	Chemistry
Joseph Drysdale	Birmingham University	Biological sciences
Luke Gunner	Southampton University	Electronic engineering
Rachel Hardy	Aston University	Business administration and human psychology
Laura Holmes	Cardiff University	Music
Geoffrey Hulbert	Bristol University	Chemistry
Graham Hulbert	Birmingham University	Mechanical engineering
Lauren Lees	St Mary's College	Drama and performance studies
Peter Liang	Royal Northern College of Music	Music
Ryosuke Murahashi	Bournemouth Institute of Art	Art
Matt Nichols	York University	Philosophy, politics and economics
Heather Roper	Bristol University	Law
Daniel Seo	City University	Finance and investment
Claire Taylor	Aston University	Business and management
Rupert Uzzell	Nottingham University	Music
Lotta von Rotenhan	Oxford Brookes University	International hospitality
Caroline Wells	Birmingham University	Management history & political science
Jessica Wells	Luton University	Make-up artistry
Jessica Weston	Bristol University	Geography
Sarah Zheng	London School of Economics	Accounting and finance



Who are these card players?  
Thoughts to Bill White.